



**FOCUS**  
MIDWEST

71

# OUT OF FOCUS

(Readers are invited to submit items for publication, indicating whether the sender can be identified. Items must be fully documented and not require any comment.)

## CREDITS

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Announcement published in 1969 in the Cairo newspaper.

## NOTICE!

On Thursday, October 30th

CHILDREN UP TO THE AGE OF 12  
WILL BE ALLOWED TO

**TRICK or TREAT**

from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

(One Night Only)

They must be Accompanied by at least  
one Adult (Unmasked).

**WILLIAM PETERSEN**

Chief of Cairo Police Dept.

"In one of the strongest efforts we've seen in some time, the Missouri State Highway Department is really pleading for support. It has gone so far as send completed editorials to papers throughout the state asking they be published as the paper's editorial supporting the department's program . . ."

Excerpted from The Dispatch, North Kansas City, Mo.

The board of directors of the East St. Louis United Fund voted to deny funding support to the Madison-St. Clair County Urban League.

East St. Louis Monitor

U.S. Public Health Service employees were told that reporters have a social disease. One unit of the agency, which is planning to close some of its hospitals, prohibited all contacts with the press including "casual social contacts."

The Archibald Newsletter

In these last few years in St. Louis, nothing has brought into focus the plight of the wretched rich — whose emotional needs are just as acute as poor folks — than has the annual Fall Festival Parade and Ball. Long used to being envied and hated, simply for being The Haves, the wealthy now feel they have to justify their having any public fun at all. And the public mood being what it is, deep soul-searching no doubt goes on over whether or not to even have the traditional lovely parade. It was perhaps poetically inevitable that this year it got rained on. But that was not the saddest event related to this year's parade. On the eve of it, black activist Percy Green and a cohort were sent to the City Workhouse to begin serving 30-day jail sentences for peace disturbance outside Kiel Auditorium at Fall Festival time two years ago. Pretty obviously, somebody made sure that Green and Company would not disrupt The Haves' event this year . . .

St. Louis Review Editorial

For 11 years, the Pentagon has had a contract with the University of Cincinnati to study the effects of atomic radiation on human beings. The prime purpose of the study, according to the contracts, has been to "understand better the influence of radiation on combat effectiveness of troops." To understand how irradiated troops might function on the battlefield, the University of Cincinnati has chosen to irradiate cancer patients who could no longer be helped by surgery. The patients were given the same kind of "total body" or "partial body" radiation troops might expect to receive in an exchange of tactical nuclear weapons. "It is my belief — my experience — that this is a helpful way of treating patients," said Dr. Eugene Saenger, the radiologist at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine who heads the research project . . .

Chicago Sun-Times

Flagstaff, Ariz. — A black man found hanging from a pine tree — noose around his neck, his legs tied together and hands bound behind his back — was declared a suicide on July 9 by an all-white coroner's jury. The body of Nathaniel Walker, 28, an unemployed ex-convict from Reno, Nevada, was found June 12 by two boys in a forested area north of Flagstaff . . . Sgt. Walt R. Hinson, the County Sheriff's deputy reconstructed Walker's death this way: After climbing to a large branch, Walker tied several lengths of military belting around a branch and his neck. He then tied his legs together with similar material, and tied a slip-knot around one wrist, putting the other wrist behind his back and through a loop in the belting. He tugged both wrists together in a loose tie and then jumped off the tree limb.

Excerpted from Washington University Student Life

For several weeks, right-wing leaders and two of their organized media monitors have been complaining that major newspapers ignored an August 4 session of the House of Representatives at which about 100 members got up in succession to cry alarm about U. S. defense and security. By September 12, the Washington Post, one of the principal targets, was tired of being harassed and printed some research about the allegations. It quoted the gripes, especially those of Accuracy In Media and News Perspective International, then exposed the fact that no more than a dozen members actually gave speeches, according to their own accounts. (The UPI said only five or six were there.) The Congressional Record had been padded with material by the others to make a total of 90 pages produced by 82 Congressmen. News Perspective International is run by William J. Gill, who is also an editor for the American Security Council, much of whose material was included in the "speeches."

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## COMING!

### Summary of Actions On Key State Votes And Recent Key Congressional Votes

Since 1962 FOCUS/Midwest has offered its subscribers a unique service: Descriptions and votes of regular bills before the General Assemblies of Illinois and Missouri. Principal past issues dealing with votes are Numbers 29, 39, and 47. Issues Number 49 and 50 present biographical sketches of all legislators running for reelection in Illinois and Missouri. Voting back issues are \$1.50 each — all five are available for \$5.00.

## OUT OF FOCUS

### LETTERS

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### *Announcement*

FOCUS/Midwest invited the Illinois Governor's Office of Human Resources to present a summary of state efforts on resolving the Cairo difficulties — or on any other aspect of the Cairo situation. The Office accepted this invitation but found it impossible to complete the article by the time we had to go to press. The article will be published in the next, regular issue (the coming issue will include voting records only).



## Letters

### MR. KOPP REPLIES:

F/M: In the column: *Out of Focus*, Volume 8, Number 53, a reprint from the *Post-Dispatch* erroneously quoted Mr. Walter Kopp, director of special education for the St. Louis public schools. Enclosed you will find a copy of the letter sent to the editor of the *Post-Dispatch* concerning the statement.

*Elaine D. Afton, Director  
Community Relations Division  
St. Louis Public Schools*

"The writer of a recent article on pregnant girls erroneously attributed a quotation concerning pregnant girls and contamination to me. The statement I made to the reporter concerned an angry parent who objected to my reassignment of a girl to a regular high school after the birth of her child. The parent said that if pregnant teenagers were allowed to remain in school they would contaminate the others. I used the parent's statement to show the attitude of some members of this community. The article also erroneously quoted me as saying the 'community preferred segregated schools for pregnant girls.' What I told the reporter was that within the present policies and regulations of the Board of Education the pregnant girl had to be educated in a separate facility."

*Walter Kopp, Director  
Special Education*

### NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS AND BUSING

F/M: The national furor generated by the U.S. Supreme Court's "outrageous" order on busing children to achieve racial balance under its May 1954 decision desegregating public schools and the sudden, soul-searching sanctity of the neighborhood school concept leave me with a cynical bitterness borne of early personal experiences. These two tenets became, ultimately, the rallying shibboleths of opposition for authoritarian segregationists, some of whom earlier had blatantly proclaimed "Not now, but NEVER!" Others, less notoriously began contriving cunning ways and means, open or subtle, to avoid compliance.

The Court had ordered desegregation "...with all deliberate speed..." and "deliberation" rather than "speed" became the watchword. By 1969 at least, the

above tenets had emerged and white parents began instilling racial hate in their tender-aged young by draping signs around their necks opposing integration some sloganeering with the word "niggers." Support for attending neighborhood schools was logical and morally right they argued. Busing children distances away from them, great or small, was illogical and morally wrong. And so it seemed to me until I recalled my own educational experiences beginning as early as kindergarten days.

I lived in a racially changing area of St. Louis between two schools for blacks each equidistant some two and one-half miles away. Our neighborhood school was but four blocks from home. But it was for whites and although but half used, blacks were required to choose between these other two distant black schools. Thus it was that as a five-year-old kindergartner I was bussed by the Board of Education those two and one-half miles twice daily UNSUPERVISED! At the end of each school day children living a sufficient distance away, arbitrarily determined by the Board, were handed two 2½¢ street car tickets and sent forth to fend for themselves from and back to school. My sister, two brothers and I, aged respectively 10, 9, 7, and 5 pooled our home-bound tickets for 5¢ worth of candy or cookies and walked home by the short cut which was down a twelve to fifteen row of main line railroad tracks which, in those days (1908) were heavily trafficked. Miraculously, I recall no instance of injury to any of us but I distinctly remember two or three near misses.

This form of busing continued throughout my grade school days ending in 1914 with graduation exercises, speeches, class prophecies, etc., as if some worthwhile goal had been attained. We had learned to read a little, write a little, and figure a very little. That is all. BUT and it was quite a but, for nearly all blacks and poor whites as well, the big question was "ARE you going to high school?" or "to work?" since fifteen was an average graduating age and child labor laws were just becoming of serious import.

When high school came for me the busing was even worse. The only black high school was over four miles distant and our parents had to furnish the car fare, automobile ownership at that time being restricted to the very rich or the affluent. Few, if any, blacks fit either category. Each morning and evening I rode by Central High School (white) then located on Grand Avenue at Windsor Place which was

exactly six and one-half blocks from my home.

With experience and knowledge such as this, how possibly can any black such as I become concerned over any merit, demerit, privation, logic or real bother over busing and neighborhood school importance. Especially when he remembers that the Federal Government itself was the initial chief architect in planning, subsidizing and constructing projects, racially proscribed and administered. This is the program that contributed mightily to the jimcrow ghettos and furnished the seeds for chickens now back home in the form of neighborhood school plights and busing furors.

Reduced to basics, if busing children far away from neighborhood schools was logically and morally right to maintain a racially separate school system, why are these practices illogical and immoral in destroying such systems?

*David M. Grant  
St. Louis, Missouri*

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*Cairo, A Prototype?*

The story of Cairo is ugly and hopeless. We wish we could offer a more promising report. Representatives of the most radical of the white vigilantes have taken over the city government. Moderate white leadership has always been noticeable by their silence. Now they are probably more fearful than ever before.

There are a few, isolated signs of progress. The white-only school, Camelot, created after the Cairo school was integrated, has been steadily losing students who have rejoined the public school system. However, this may create some difficulties in the public schools. Since the problem is as much economic as racial, the location of several, albeit small, industries in that area should be heartily welcomed. The election of a moderate as chairman of the Alexander County Council about completes the inventory of hope.

Is Cairo an exception or it is a prototype? Whitney E. Young calls Cairo

"... a national problem in that it reflects the deep currents of racial animosity that could seriously harm this country. Cairo is a living demonstration of how a town can become consumed by racism and degenerate into the law of the jungle rather than negotiate differences.... Its experience should be a lesson to those of us in other cities who think that racial problems aren't in the crisis stage, or that they're easily solved and all it takes is time."

Dr. Jack Kirkland, St. Louis educator, delineates four progressive phases of black selfawareness.

"Once a man is made aware of his dignity that adorns his manhood, it becomes an inseparable part of him. Before an individual will have it desecrated, he is willing to entertain the ultimate sacrifice.

"Phase I for the black man is a mental revolution of self and historical discovery. It is mentally digesting the concepts and rights of equal access, equal opportunity, and equal protection as one pursues the limits of his potential and capacity. To internalize such thoughts, sends nourishment into the blood and muscle of a person. It is a rejection of a subhuman status even when it has been forged by three and a half centuries of dehumanization.

"Phase II finds the black individual consciously, unconsciously, visibly, and vocally carrying out the dictates of such a mentality. It is acting on these beliefs and actualizing one's manhood through self presentation, protest, and demands of human consideration which precipitates violent responses from an unbending, unyielding, and callous majority.

"Phase III for the black man is the candid, blatant acknowledgement that there is no respect for black humanity and black unity in a system of institutionalized racism. Dignity and survival commanded through cultural, united, economic solidarity, and protection of one's self and one's people is perceived as arrogance, anti-American, and revolutionary.

"Phase IV is all out indiscriminate shooting.

"Every sane person states that Phase IV could be calamitous yet their investment in Phase II and III is less than adequate! and the risk of speaking up is too awesome to even contemplate.

"Cairo is a classic prototype of the paths that are available to America. Each step that we take in Cairo brings us closer to the schism, the rupture, and the final irreversible decision. We are all involved in its making."

Two years ago, a special Illinois House Committee was appointed to investigate the "allegations concern-

ing the County of Alexander and the City of Cairo." The Committee found a breakdown in communications. An emotional gulf between neighbors, economic and social disruption of such proportion that any "social change whatsoever is going to create a trauma." After a detailed examination the Committee recommended reforms in law enforcement, integration of the city and county departments, intervention of the state's attorney general to enforce existing Illinois civil rights laws, making available federal funds, various statutory measures which would directly affect the process of law, order, and justice in Cairo.

Also two years ago, Lieutenant Governor Paul Simon advanced a number of recommendations to ease tensions and "build the basis of a better and more prosperous community." Lt. Gov. Simon urged the city to hire more black police officers, the Cairo National Guard to integrate, all local vigilante groups to disband, and all official commissions and the City Council to add blacks.

He recommended regular meetings between the City Council and black precinct committeemen and clergy. He asked private employers to examine their black/white ratio and rectify imbalances. He requested the Illinois Human Resources Commission to establish a branch office in Cairo.

And, most important among many other suggestions, "The state must provide leadership in helping Cairo resolve its problems."

Practically nothing has changed since the report of the Illinois House Committee or the recommendations of Lt. Gov. Simon. The state, we must conclude, has abdicated responsibility. Although it is politically harmful for any elected official to become involved in Cairo — we consider such a consideration obscene in view of what is at stake.

The situation in Cairo has deteriorated beyond the redeeming power of local good will. There are no reserves of moderation on either side. Only two steps are left to modify the present course of events: massive state intervention and/or massive federal intervention.

Foremost, it is the responsibility of Gov. Richard B. Ogilvie to exercise his power. The Governor could withhold every penny of state funds, be they for highway construction and any other purpose, until both sides sit down and work out their differences. If the Governor's program won't have the desired effect, the Federal government should be asked to intervene directly. They could declare the region a disaster area which would make various funds available. The Federal government could build major regional offices, which, in effect, would create a new "local industry." The Federal government could instruct its Justice Department to enforce all laws irrespective of the consequences. Etc.

Nothing is happening. In an election year, nothing will happen. This disregard for the people of Cairo, white and black, point to the conclusions of Young and Kirkland as the bitter reality of America today. Cairo might be a bordertown between North and South, it might be too small to be of concern to state or federal officials, the social and political crisis might have unique aspects which cannot repeat themselves in other places — but these particularities also point out what officialdom would do, if they can escape accountability. The people of Cairo are not different than the people of Kansas City or Chicago. Who is so courageous to say that it cannot happen somewhere else?

### *A Reply to Senator Eagleton*

Senator Thomas F. Eagleton (D., Mo.) has gone to great length in explaining his early endorsement of Senator Edmund Muskie for president. While Senator Stuart Symington and Governor Warren E. Hearnes fully participated in the endorsement, it was Senator Eagleton who took the brunt of liberal criticism. After all, it was in 1968 that large numbers of energetic and dedicated Missourians became active in politics for the first time by working vigorously for Eagleton's election. To many of them, the endorsement meant that once again the selection process would be dictated from top down, that Missouri politics remain closed to grass-roots participation, and that the professionals and "insiders" would run things as usual.

Eagleton's answer was forthright and to the point. He endorsed Muskie because (1) Muskie is the best man, (2) it would be "moral cowardice" to find out first how the wind blows before announcing his conviction (besides, the Senator was careful to mention, the overwhelming majority of Missourians do want Muskie), (3) as a Senator he is not only representing but also leading his constituency, and, moreover (4) as a citizen he should not be disenfranchised from working for his favorite candidate. On the surface, the Senator's points are both rational and convincing — except for the implicit fallacy in his final point: *he is not just a citizen, he is a party leader of immense power in the state. This power imposes not only privileges, but also responsibilities. And while it is the Senator's absolute privilege to lead, which we endorse, it is also his responsibility to keep the selection process open, which, in terms of past Missouri politics, far outweighs any other consideration.*

In a different state, in a different election, or against a different historical background, we would shout hosannah after every one of the Senator's persuasive and courageous words explaining his endorsement at the recent state convention of the New Democratic Coalition of Missouri.

But, for heaven's sake and the Democratic Party's sake, it is not just another election. It is the first testing of the Democratic Party after the brutality of 1968. Scores of Democrats are sitting on the fence whether the Democratic Party likes it or not. Possibly, only the ugliness of four more Nixon years and the threat of more Supreme Court appointments (as Eagleton emphasized in his speech) might move them to support the Democratic ticket. Is this kind of reluctant participation what the Democratic Party wants?

Incidentally, Missouri Democrats are not agitated at the prospect of a Muskie election. Their indignation is not directed against the Senator from Maine. The point is not the candidate, the point is the openness of Missouri politics.

Eagleton, Symington, and Hearnes must have known that their action would stifle activity on behalf of other candidates, and that is precisely the effect it appears to be having. We know many a committeeman and woman who are slavish followers of the official word. For them expressions of local sentiment will only be welcome if in agreement with "the word," all else will sooner or later be labeled the wailings of "outsiders," "newcomers," and habitual malcontents. This approach has been most effective in the past and there is no reason why it will not be employed again.

Senator Eagleton, we must assume, has more trust in the limited reforms of the Democratic Party in Missouri than we have. Officially, Missouri has been ruled

in accord with the recommendations of the McGovern Reform Committee. One of these reforms was the elimination of the unit rule among the national delegates. If it makes sense at the national level, it should also make sense at the state and local township level.

Indeed, proportional representation at the 1972 Township meetings is a must to keep the party united. We pray that the "regulars" will learn that it is not victory or defeat which counts, but the feeling for political minorities that they had a fair shake. Without proportional representation at every level of the presidential selection process, the prospects for a united party are receding.

Senator Eagleton has exercised the privilege of announcing his preference, which is his right. Now it is up to the Senator to assure, even at the expense of his favorite candidate, that Missouri adopts proportional representation as an absolute rule.

Liberals can accept no less and they must hold Senator Eagleton as well as Senator Symington and Governor Hearnes responsible for its adoption.

### *The Pentagon Papers, a Skirmish*

Disaster was avoided when Nixon's two appointees were unable to persuade a majority of their colleagues on the Supreme Court to abrogate the First Amendment to the United States Constitution in the case of the Pentagon Papers.

Our feeling of relief, however, is similar to that of a disbeliever in capital punishment whenever an accused escapes the death penalty. The bad law still is on the books, and most Americans don't realize that the evil system whereby the Nixonites tried to prevent the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, and other papers from informing the public, is of comparatively recent origin.

We were 175 years old and had survived many crises, including two world wars, without censorship. Then, Sept. 24, 1951, President Truman, "in the name of national security," directed all government agencies to classify and withhold news. In an editorial, "A New Threat to U.S. Freedom," in its issue of Sept. 28, 1951, the *Chicago Sun-Times* said: "The new regulation will give Washington officials just another excuse for keeping legitimate information from the public."

After Truman held a press conference which the *Sun-Times* described as "a confusing half hour," the newspaper on Oct. 8, 1951 warned editorially of the "dangerous situation" likely to result from the new order. It said: "The public's right to information never should be threatened by one man's whim or prejudice of the moment. It is because we believe that the President's recent secrecy order might result in just such a threat — that it may result in a cover-up of legitimate information that we have demanded it be rescinded."

Every organization of journalists has opposed the censorship trends of the past 20 years. Committees have issued scathing reports pointing out that the American people have been kept in the dark as regards virtually every important event for two decades, especially as relates to foreign affairs. President Eisenhower lied as long as he could regarding the U-2 affair, until the Russians produced the plane and the live pilot. President Kennedy lied about the Bay of Pigs and the missiles crisis. President Johnson lied about the invasion of the Dominican Republic. All

of these presidents and most everyone else in high positions has lied constantly regarding our trillion dollar boondoggle in Southeast Asia.

We cannot continue to depend upon the United States Supreme Court to say "not guilty" in specific cases. We must eliminate the law. The press of America remains the greatest single protection against fascism, even though it is, as Adlai Stevenson said, a One Party Press, conservative and devoted to the Establishment, of which it is a part. This press still doesn't like to be pushed around by government. Let us realize how thoroughly ignorant we were about Vietnam before the Pentagon Papers were leaked. Let us honor the name of Daniel Ellsberg for the great patriotic service he performed.

### *More on the Chicago Board of Education Referendum*

A University of Chicago educator recently analyzed Mayor Daley's puzzling neutrality in the campaign for the referendum proposing an elected school board for Chicago. Writing in the current issue of *Education at Chicago*, Professor Paul E. Peterson points out that Daley may never have wanted an elected school board but went along with the proposal by Democratic legislators to appease voters in white middle- and working-class ethnic areas.

Peterson believes that Daley was confident that the referendum would not be passed because of press opposition and the votes of "the lake-ward independents, the blacks, and those machine wards in the hands of his closest Irish allies." He suggests Daley's other considerations may have been: (1) an elected board filled with "hacks" who would only make school an even more controversial area of local politics, (2) the election of reform opponents from Hyde Park and Gold Coast areas, independent-minded blacks, and Republicans, and (3) the possibility for an agreement reached with the current advisory commission that "limits had to be placed on the 'independence' of school board nominees."

After the Mayor failed to take a position on the elected school board, it was our thought that he preferred to retain the present appointive system. He might have reasoned that people would feel the Democratic Party dominated elections anyway and an elected board made him even more responsible for the deficiencies of the system. Since speaking out one way or the other would have undoubtedly alienated a significant number of voters, he wisely chose to remain silent and permitted his forces to defeat the referendum.

In our judgment, the Mayor does not leave anything to chance if he can help it. It does not seem to be his nature to permit any important body to be autonomous in fact. Peterson's suggestion, therefore, that Daley has reached an agreement with the current advisory commission is farfetched. It is much more likely that the commission is an empty form which he ignores or uses at will.

### *Much Needed ACLU Chapter Founded*

A promising development for the Illinois side of the St. Louis Metropolitan area is the formation of an American Civil Liberties Union Chapter — the first in the populous East St. Louis-Belleville-Alton-Granite City-Collinsville area. Altogether eight counties are included: St. Clair, Madison, Randolph,

Monroe, Bond, Macoupin, Jersey, and Calhoun.

The chapter will enjoy the chairmanship of George R. Ripplinger, Jr., a Belleville attorney and a graduate of the University of Illinois College of Law. Bill Gish, a graduate student in psychology at SIU, who helped arrange the organization meeting, was elected vice chairman, and the Rev. Michael Lucey, a member of the East St. Louis United Front, secretary.

The new unit will not be long finding work to do. For as Chairman Ripplinger said heretofore the only ACLU chapter to call on locally has been in St. Louis "and lawyers there aren't licensed to practice in Illinois." Secretary Lucey looks in the direction of those most in need of ACLU help when he points to the poor in the community, white as well as black. The right of a schoolboy to determine the length of his hair is not to be ignored, but more urgent are the rights of the poor to a fair livelihood and decent housing.

Welcome and congratulations to the new ACLU chapter.

### *Rightist Push Camouflaged as "Media Research"*

We are indebted to *Group Research Report* for disclosing a right-wing subsidy to attack the credibility of the media. GRR reports that broadcasting circles and some of the press are buzzing about a book-length attack on network newscasts by Edith Efron, an employee of *TV Guide* who monitored the networks during the 1968 election and found liberal bias against Nixon, the war, etc.

Her book, *The News Twisters*, got a Washington luncheon send-off by Accuracy In Media and has been applauded by rightist publications. Book reviews elsewhere have considered a point-by-point answer from CBS and concluded that it is Miss Efron who did the twisting.

Some have also pointed out that the source of her acknowledged subsidy for the project, the Historical Research Foundation, gave it a slant to the right. Those who did a little research discovered that the Foundation is an extension of the old "China lobby," which centered around Alfred Kohlberg and was started with \$175,000 from his estate, GRR reveals.

Trustees of the Foundation include Kohlberg heirs and a group close to *National Review* and the Conservative Party of New York — William F. Buckley, Jr., has been a trustee for years. *Broadcasting* magazine reports that the Efron project grew out of a cocktail conversation between her and Buckley, who offered Foundation money.

The Foundation was headed until his death by Commodore Frederick G. Reinicke, an original Birch endorser.

Besides grants to Miss Efron, the Foundation supported Joseph Keeley, author of *The China Lobby Man*, a flattering 1969 biography of Kohlberg with an introduction by Buckley which was published by Arlington House, an affiliate of the Conservative Book Club. Arlington House also received grants from the Foundation, and it has just published another book by Keeley which will stir up the same dispute: *The Left-Leaning Antenna*.

Keeley once edited the American Legion magazine, and a publisher of that magazine has been a trustee of the Foundation, says GRR.

# CAIRO NEWSPAPER — HOUSE ORGAN FOR WHITES /

LEONARD BOSCARINE

"Give me that damn camera," Cairo's assistant police chief shouted as he ran up to where I was standing.

I was confused. After all it was only a few months ago that I had been issued press credentials by his department, credentials which were supposed to ensure police-press cooperation while performing my job as a reporter-photographer for the *Cairo Evening Citizen*, the town's only daily newspaper.

I recovered enough to show those same papers and to explain who I was. I remember thinking that this seemed stupid, especially since everyone in the town of 6,500 knew everyone else.

Besides I drove a bright-red imported sportscar, not the commonest of vehicles on the town's Chevy and Ford laden streets.

"Give me that damn camera," Charlie Jestus repeated, his hand reaching for his pistol.

Again I explained what I was doing and presented my press credentials. Again this had no effect.

Noticing that several other policemen were advancing on me with their clubs raised I handed over my camera. I had seen too many men beaten that day, and I certainly didn't want to give the police an excuse to use their clubs on me.

Jestus grabbed the camera and handed it to one of the policemen who had advanced on me.

After telling me to clear the street he turned and walked over to where several others were standing.

I said a silent prayer of thanks that I hadn't been clubbed.

## "Stay Away From Downtown"

The day had started out easily enough with my main concern being the purchase of Christmas gifts for my relatives. Even though the Cairo weather didn't have the "bite" generally associated with Yuletide activities it was Dec. 5, 1970.

Thoughts of Christmas gaiety were shoved to the back of my mind while I was eating a combination of breakfast and lunch in Bob's Restaurant, a quiet cafe located across the street from the city police station.

I hadn't started on my cheeseburger when a former deputy sheriff sat down next to me.

"I don't like it. Stay away from downtown today. Somebody's gonna get killed and it could be you," he said after first glancing around the room to make sure that no one overheard our conversation.

"They're going to use the ordinance on the niggers today. You know what that means."

Indeed I did.

The Cairo City Council, after pressure from the local white hats group, had drafted and passed an ordinance designed to outlaw picketing in the downtown area. The United Front, a group representing Cairo's Blacks, had

been picketing downtown businesses for nearly two years as a protest against discrimination in the stores.

It was a powerful weapon which had stopped many shoppers from using the downtown area. Several businesses had closed.

After finishing my sandwich I telephoned Joe Culver, a fellow writer who had been assigned to the police beat after I had been transferred to covering activities in nearby Pulaski County. At the time of the job transfer I was told that the mayor and the police commissioner were complaining that I wouldn't accept the news being passed on to me by the police and that I had the "nerve" to ask the Front's publicity man for his version of what had happened.

And it was no secret in the divided town that I had dated a civil rights worker. And the townspeople complained about my having dinner at the chief legal counsel's residence on several occasions.

When I telephoned Culver's residence his wife told me that Joe was very sick and that she had put him to bed under doctor's orders. The day before he had been complaining about having caught the flu. A look at his face had confirmed the diagnosis.

The two of us made up the paper's news staff.

"That leaves you," I said to myself as I drove back to my apartment and loaded a camera with high speed film. The camera had a telephoto lens which permitted me to stay discretely away from the action while taking photos.

I had purchased the gear while I was a photojournalist with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Vietnam. There had been times when a closeup lens was somewhat impractical.

## The Police Were Ready

Downtown I was amazed by the large number of local police. They were all dressed alike and wearing their riot helmets. Recognition of individuals was even more difficult as many had removed their badges.

Uniformed state police were not in sight.

About 4 p.m. the picketing began. The streets were crowded with residents who had come to see the ordinance be enforced. Cars jammed the downtown streets.

The pickets hadn't made a complete circuit of the downtown area when an argument broke out between a white and one of the pickets.

The Black was grabbed by policemen who had rushed to the scene. Other cops began clubbing him with riot sticks. Still not satisfied the police spreadeagled the Black on the top of a car and began clubbing him in earnest.

A white minister who worked with the Blacks came up and tried to prevent the beating. He too was clubbed before being dragged to a nearby squad car.

The crowd had rushed up to see the "action." Someone fired a shot into the air.



## Blacks Clubbed at Random

After the shot was fired police began selecting Blacks and clubbing them. Standing across the street I photographed all of this.

The first time I really knew fear that afternoon came when a policeman stopped a panel truck being driven by a Black. The cop had lowered his short barreled shotgun at the front of the truck. Fortunately, the driver stopped. I was directly in the line of fire.

Seeing that I was taking pictures a policeman raised his club and came across the street toward me. Another one, recognizing me from my days on the police beat, called him back.

Shooting broke out in the next block and hundreds of rounds could be heard as the submachine guns came into use. Moments later I heard an ambulance go into the area so I followed. When I got there a man was being loaded into an ambulance.

Standing under guard against nearby buildings were several persons, all of whom were being either searched or clubbed.

Standing across the street was the white Catholic priest assigned to the black parish. I was photographing all of this when a policeman pointed his club at me.

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THE CAIRO  
EVENING CITIZEN

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TO: Leonard Boscarine  
SUBJ: Termination Notice

December 7, 1970

As of this date we are forced to terminate your employment with Cairo Newspapers, Inc., as a reporter.

In our opinion, the severance of your employment will serve the best interest of the newspaper and of your future as a newsman.

The Cairo scene today is probably the most difficult of any in the country to cover as a reporter. Only a reporter who can sacrifice much personal relationships, and remain aloof of the problems plaguing the city can hope to adequately do his job.

Prime news sources of any newspaper are the official sources such as public officials, police, etc. When a reporter is cut off from these sources he is very limited in the scope of his work.

On the small newspaper such as ours, a reporter must be able to maintain contacts with this type of source and when his contacts become limited to the extent that assignments are necessarily on a restricted basis, the work load becomes such in the editorial department that we cannot cope with the daily volume of news emanating from Cairo.

Unfortunately, you have encountered numerous conflicts with some sources, that for whatever reason, restricted your capabilities in securing from sources news and in maintaining close contact with these sources.

We feel that your personal relationships in some cases has affected judgement on what is creditable news.

A great part of being a reporter in a small town is the ability to maintain close and continual personal contact with official sources.

We feel that you have benefited immeasurably with your experience gained while in our employ and trust it will be useful to you in your career.

The payroll clerk will immediately remit to you in full the monies due you to date. (See attached envelope.)

James W. Flanary  
Managing Editor  
Cairo Newspapers, Inc.

"Hey, you can't take our picture," he shouted.

It was then that Jestus came running over to me.

My reaction to my camera being taken was to drive to the police station and try to get my camera from the captain on duty in the radio room. I couldn't get in because the front door was locked.

I simply walked around to the back entrance where the prisoners were being brought in. The captain responded by ordering me to leave and then bolting the door after me.

Meanwhile lawyers from the civil rights group were pounding on the door and asking to see their clients. Nearly nine hours would pass before their request would be granted.

## Editor Works with FBI

Feeling even more frustrated I drove to the newspaper and filed a report with Associated Press. Then, I called the managing editor and told him what had happened.

He came down to the newspaper office after calling the paper's publisher. The managing editor called the police station to confirm that there had been trouble. Then he telephoned the Federal Bureau of Investigation agent in Carbondale.

This was the first time that I was permitted to know that he was feeding information about the area to the government group.

Later the publisher came in carrying my camera. The film had been removed.

When I came to work Monday the staff treated me just as if everything was normal. After the publisher and the managing editor had gone home for the day I found a letter of termination on my desk.

No mention was made in Monday's edition about the camera incident. Instead the paper ran a statement by the mayor in which he praised the police for their handling of Saturday's trouble.

Other workers at the paper told me that the advertisers had warned the publisher to fire me or their business would stop.

## Police Lie in Court

Later the Cairo police chief would testify in Alexander County Circuit Court that he did not know anything about the film in the camera.

Other police testified that they had seen the camera in the patrol car but none would admit having brought it into the station.

Jestus, who had returned the camera to my former boss, testified that he had no idea about what could have happened to the film.

He confiscated the camera because I was waving it in his face while I was insulting him, Jestus testified.

He said that it looked as though I was going to hit him with the camera.

The Catholic priest who had been standing across the street refuted his testimony.

My experiences have taught me to be somewhat skeptical about all news emanating from Cairo, whether from officials, wire services, or anyone who has to live in this garrisoned city.

Leonard Boscarine is a reporter with the Independent Register, Libertyville, Illinois.

# THE STORY OF CONFRONTATION / WILLIAM R. BRINTON

Driving on U.S. 51 through Cairo, Illinois, you can see a few "closed" signs on drive-in restaurants and most of the motels along U.S. 51 appear to be deserted even in the hunting season, but that's about all. Chances are you probably won't get downtown to Commercial Street to see the vacant store fronts; and you probably won't even see the bullet holes in the rectory of St. Columba Catholic Church or the burned out homes and businesses in Cairo's black community.

Once a booming river town strategically located between the big Ohio and Mississippi rivers, Cairo is a town forgotten by the surge of modern technology; abandoned by towboat captains who once stopped there for refueling on their long journey northward. Perhaps because of its

geographic location at the southern tip of Illinois, coupled with its proximity to Kentucky and Tennessee, Cairo is steeped in southern tradition.

Cairo is a town of just over six thousand people, about half of whom are Black; and it has been steadily losing population, recording a drop of 33 per cent from just over nine thousand, between the 1960 and 1970 census.

Basis System, Inc., in a report for the Illinois Office of Economic Opportunity, ranks Cairo first among 86 cities in Illinois with populations between 5,000 and 10,000 where families earn less than \$3,000 a year income, an amount deemed by the Federal Government to be less than the subsistence level. The report says of the 2,369



families living in Cairo in 1960, 1,057 earned less than \$3,000 annually. Cairo ranks third among the 86 cities in unemployment with an overall rate of 8.2 per cent and as high as 20 per cent among what the report classifies as non-white males. It ranks second among the 86 cities in substandard housing with a total of 1,637 of the town's 3,575 houses declared substandard. Only ten new homes have been built in Cairo within the last ten years.

Cairo is a study in contrast, seemingly mismatched with the lush green fields that surround this dying town in what is popularly known as Little Egypt. It is a dirty town, decaying from within, torn by racial strife; it is a community where rifle shots penetrating the quiet nights have become the rule rather than the exception. It may well be the most polarized community in the nation.

### **Blacks Launch Boycott**

The problem in Cairo has existed since the Civil War, but it all began to surface over two years ago on April 7, 1969, when the black community launched an economic boycott against Cairo's downtown merchants. The boycott was initiated seven days after the formation of the United Front of Cairo, a predominantly black religious and civil rights group. Its leader, 25-year-old Rev. Charles E. Koen, has been involved in the civil rights struggle since he was 16 years old. Three of the directors working under Rev. Koen are Bobby Williams, director of economic development; Leon Page, national coordinator; and the Rev. Manker Harris, public relations director. Harris is the only white leader in the movement.

In initiating the boycott, the United Front demanded that Blacks be employed in stores in more than "service" jobs approaching a 50-50 ratio where at all possible, Blacks must be treated with respect and with the dignity they deserve, and finally, white merchants must stop calling black people offensive and obscene names. The city was given a list of 14 demands, among them equal hiring practices in the police and fire departments, equal representation on the board of public utilities and housing authority, appointment of a black police chief and a black assistant fire chief, and creation of a new city department whose director would be responsible for bringing new industry into Cairo.

### **Arson, Shootings in Black Community**

Within a few days of the boycott the acts of arson and shootings began to occur in the black community. Fear of the results of the boycott caused hatred to mount in the white community. The initial reign of terror lasted throughout April and May of 1969, until the Illinois State Police moved in during June to restore order to the city, at least on a temporary basis.

Isolated incidents of violence continued to break out. According to Rev. Harris, "The shootings average about four hours, but they can last six or seven hours." Rev. Harris plays a tape recorder in the quiet of the rectory. It is a three-hour tape recorded during one five-hour battle; suddenly the quiet of the rectory is punctuated with the staccato of automatic weapons fire. The United Front claims shootings have occurred on more than 25 per cent of the nights since the boycott began. These periodic shootings have claimed the lives of three people, including a 23-year-old black soldier home on leave. All of those killed have been Black, scores of other Blacks have been injured. At least 25 businesses, 43 homes, and 25 cars owned by Blacks have either been burned, assaulted by bricks, or shot at during the boycott period.

St. Columba Catholic Church and the all-black Pyramid Court housing project have been the main targets for the shootings. St. Columba's rectory serves as a living quarters

for some of the United Front leaders; a building on the opposite side of the church is maintained by the United Front as a headquarters and information center. But it is the church itself which serves as the focal point for all of the United Front activities; it is the site of the United Front Saturday Spiritual Rally held each week since the boycott began. The spiritual rally begins at one o'clock and usually lasts until about four o'clock when the picketing is conducted in downtown Cairo. Saturday is the only day that demonstrations are held and even these last for only about one hour. The boycott has been observed by nearly 100 per cent of the black people of Cairo, thus the demonstrations serve only as a reminder to both sides that the boycott is still in effect.

### **A Revolver and A Bible**

St. Columba is an old church, like the buildings and homes surrounding it, signs of neglect are in evidence. Well worn pews rest on a tile floor and the stained glass windows and a few religious ornaments on the walls are the only reminders that this is a church. There is no altar. In its place in the center of the church is a picture of a revolver resting on a King James Bible, the symbol of the United Front Liberators. A banner to the left bears the slogan, "Before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave." Over to the right, resting on the stage, are two pianos which provide accompaniment to the ten-member United Front Choir.

The message which the United Front has been carrying to the black people of Cairo is all laid out each Saturday at the spiritual rally. It is both a psychological and an emotional message told in a fashion that is basic to the people involved in a struggle. In the absence of the Rev. Koen, Bobby Williams sets the stage and pace for the rally.

### **The Longest Revolutionary Struggle**

Like all rallies, it is designed to provide solidarity and support to the cause, but this one was done with more subtlety than most. Williams begins with a progress report on The Palace, one of the cooperative stores owned by the United Front, then the choir sings, "I'm Pressing On." There are other spiritual hymns, "Think About It" and "You Got To Trust God," intermingled with the speaking and the reports. It is as if the speakers are saying "Look what we've accomplished. Now let's go out there and demonstrate one more Saturday." Williams announces the formation of political education classes for young people, "So that the same mistakes are not repeated." Then abruptly he admonishes those who will take part in the demonstration to be aware of the dangers facing them, urging them to use caution and restraint: "It will be dangerous for all (the demonstrators), particularly for those of you from out of town. If anything gets out of hand, the situation will be handled by the Brothers. Cairo is the longest revolutionary struggle in the nation. Some of us will go to prison, some will be killed, and some will go to concentration camps."

Switching once again, Williams talks about workshops on survival and says that first aid supplies have arrived from throughout the nation; the supplies are to be distributed to those who already have first aid kits, placed strategically in homes within the black community in preparation for any outbreak of violence. The emotions mount as the demonstrators prepare themselves to go out into the streets. They know that people have been beaten in previous marches downtown. "This thing (boycott) has been reduced to one word: Survive," says the Rev. Shermion Jones, pastor of the First Missionary Baptist Church of Cairo. He has taken over the podium to preach



an emotion-torn sermon on "What the Bible Says About Man's Rights," a message so charged with feelings that at times tears stream down the minister's face. "I know you are tired, but we must go on. I saw 200 state troopers beat people to the ground, but you can love and still be militant."

And then they are ready, the young college students from the University of Illinois, down for the Saturday rally; the young Blacks from Cairo. The rally provides the people with a reason to continue; it is a matter of determining why it must be done, of recounting all of the accomplishments which have been made within the last two years.

### The Police Wait

The police are already there, waiting for the demonstrators on Commercial Street; lined up facing the street, their backs against the store fronts; two officers in front of each store. Across the street small groups of men silently wait for the demonstrators. They talk among themselves but there is no laughter. It is a grim, serious group of men, waiting for something to happen. When the demonstrators appear more police begin arriving; they patrol the streets in unmarked and marked cars, four to a car. The marchers carry signs calling for an end to racial discrimination, discriminatory hiring practices, and ask for "Law and Order," but pointing out there is "No Justice in Cairo."

There are few shoppers during the demonstrations and the few who do venture into the stores make remarks about the white demonstrators, particularly the young college women. Young black men, part of the contingent of Brothers, station themselves along the protest route. They will maintain order at the marches, protecting the demonstrators against attack. They stand there, those brothers, watching the buildings across the street, the windows and the cars, waiting for the reflection from a metal object such as a rifle. The demonstration ends abruptly, sometimes peacefully, other times violently.

If the day passes without violence it is very unlikely that such an uneasy truce will last throughout the night. There is speculation but no evidence that the Blacks initiate some of the almost nightly shooting incidents to both maintain sympathy for their cause and to keep the community polarized through fear.

### The White Threat Is Real

Unlike the alleged fear tactics pursued by Cairo's Blacks, the threat of violence from the white community is real. A vigilante group, known as the White Hats, has been deputized even though the State of Illinois has declared the organization illegal. The White Hat Headquarters is located in downtown Cairo, just a few doors off Commercial Street. A large sign over the door proclaims it as the United Citizens Council of America. Beneath an emblem of crossed American and Confederate flags is a double slogan, "States Rights-Racial Integrity" and "Organization is the Key to Victory." This paramilitary group has been in existence for several years. They are well trained, armed, and many have citizens band radios in their cars, providing them with an effective communications network.

United Front leaders say most of the shootings into the black community are directed from a levee about two blocks east of Pyramid Court. A fertilizer plant, located between Pyramid Court and the levee, was leveled by fire last August. The United Front maintains that shots fired into the rectory at St. Columba Catholic Church, the latest count which stands at 41 bullet holes, are directed



from the roof of the Cairo Police Station. *By lining up two bullet holes in the window with the storm window of the rectory, the trajectory would indicate that both shots came from the roof of the police station.*

### The Role of the State Police

State police are permanently stationed in Cairo, their numbers range from 50 to 150, plus an armored car which is alternately used in Cairo and Carbondale to the north. On February 2, 1970, state police attempted to obtain a blanket search warrant to look for weapons in Pyramid Court; two days later they encircled the Court but later dispersed. On August 15, 1970 the American Nazi Party, some with jackboots and all with swastika armbands, paraded in downtown Cairo with placards which called for support of "White Policemen" and urged the populace to "Shoot Black Snipers." The night after the downtown demonstration by the Nazis a three- and a-half-hour gun battle was waged against the Blacks and some automatic weapons fire was reported.

State police shot parachute-type flares into the air over Pyramid Court on September 1, after a truckload of White Hats drove through the black housing project, then went to 16th Street where they began firing into the Pyramid Court. State police later tried to storm the Court from three directions but were repulsed by return fire from the Court. The shootings continued throughout October and November.

On October 23, 1970, Mayor Pete Thomas announced that black guerrillas attacked the police station and fired over 400 rounds into the building, however, there is no evidence to support the charge.

It would appear that most of the shootings are initiated by the White Hats or individuals sympathetic to that organization, but after lengthy interviews it seems apparent that both sides are withholding at least some information.

### Pyramid Court — A Fortress

Pyramid Court is a restricted area; this "liberated" section is not open to outsiders and although the leaders of the United Front do not deny access to the area, they inform newsmen that they will not be responsible if an outsider is caught in the Court "for security reasons."

Pyramid Court is a series of 250 all brick apartment complexes two stories high. Houses and buildings surrounding the court have been leveled by fire, some of which were believed to have been set by the White Hats while others were reportedly set by the black community to destroy the cover which the White Hats could use in firing into the court from close range. The Court itself offers a natural fortress against invasion; it is virtually an armed camp.

Self-protection has become a necessity for the Blacks of Cairo and as a result precautionary measures such as burning vacant homes around the Pyramid Court has been justified. The religious-oriented United Front finds justification in Nehemiah 4:17: "They who build on the wall and those who bore burdens, burden themselves; everyone with one of his hands wrought in the work and with the other hand held a weapon."

The Brothers, referred to as the Vanguard among the United Front's inner circle, functions both as the protective arm of the front for Saturday's demonstrations and to maintain order within the black community. Police are not welcome in the black community and are seldom seen there; the United Front maintains the police are not allowed within the confines of the black community. The Brothers may accuse an individual of violating one of the rules, such as stealing or using narcotics. A trial is held at

St. Columba's Church and if found guilty, the offender could be exiled from the black community. The need for self-protection is voiced openly. National Coordinator Leon Page says, "I have no qualms about defending myself or my brothers and sisters."

### IACP Blasts Cairo Police

Justification for self-policing is found in a study conducted last summer by the International Association of Chiefs of Police which issued a blistering attack on the Cairo Police Department. The survey was conducted by the Field Operations Division of the IACP. The survey team, headed by Charles G. Vanderbosch, assistant director of the IACP, says of the Cairo Police Department: "Cairo police personnel are generally untrained and incapable of coping with the many problems facing them. They are, to some extent, undisciplined and lack leadership or managerial direction."

The survey report says that state police CID officials recorded 37 fires of suspicious origin in Cairo between April 24 and June 30, 1969, yet the Cairo police records indicate only 15 such fires during the same period of time. Between April of 1969 and February of 1970 there were an estimated 80 shooting incidents in Cairo, yet as of February 1970, no arrests were made in connection with the shootings. The report analyzed the city this way: "Cairo exhibits many facets of southern culture, foremost among them are the racial attitudes of the Old South." It lists median educational level in 1960 at 8.8 years of schooling, "significantly lower than the national median of 10.6 years."

### Courts Upset Anti-Boycott Ordinances

Intermingled with the shootings are legal maneuvers aimed at halting the weekly picketing of downtown merchants. During August of 1969, the city council passed an emergency ordinance which limited the number of demonstrators in the city at one time to six individuals. That ordinance was overturned by U.S. District Court Judge Henry Wise on September 13, 1969.

In October, state police attempted to halt demonstrators from crossing state highways through use of Illinois' peddler statute, which requires an individual to obtain a permit 10 days before setting up a roadside stand alongside a state highway. But U.S. District Court Judge David Juergens issued an order on October 7, prohibiting the state police from making arrests under the state law.

On June 8, 1970, a warrant was issued for the arrest of Rev. Harris, charging him with the attempted murder of two Cairo police detectives.

Last summer, the United Front purchased eleven lots within the black community to be used as a shopping center, but the city council has refused to act on a request for a change in zoning from residential to commercial. A suit is pending on that request.

Downtown Cairo merchants once claimed a \$29 million annual business but much of that volume has dissipated both because of the boycott and by the threat of violence, which keeps some of the shoppers away from the downtown area. Officials of the Cairo Chamber of Commerce and the Merchants Association refuse to discuss the effects of the boycott with outside newsmen, saying they have received adverse publicity in the past. But United Front officials say at least \$5 million of that \$29 million came from the black community prior to the boycott. That \$5 million is spent elsewhere now, partially in the two cooperative stores owned by the United Front and the rest in nearby Cape Girardeau through a daily bus service to that Missouri border town. The bus service is operated by the United Front.



### Downtown Merchants Offer 30 Jobs, UF Wants 88

Last summer, the downtown merchants, together with the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Cairo, moved to end the then 18-month-old boycott by issuing a "Proclamation of Peace and Progress." At a news conference, Cairo's merchants offered the black community 12 full-time and six part-time jobs while the city offered them 12 jobs, six on the police department and six on the fire department; but all of the city jobs would be contingent upon a six-month probationary period. None of the jobs would become effective until 30 days after the boycott ended.

The United Front had requested 88 jobs in Cairo's 40 downtown business establishments; and of the offer, they said it was inadequate because it would only return about \$75,000 in annual salaries to Blacks in Cairo. The people of the black community voted to reject the offer and maintain the boycott. The election was conducted by a show of hands of the 600 people present at a Saturday rally and through a canvass of the black community.

White merchants cried intimidation, claiming it was not a popular election and only a few Blacks voted or were coerced into voting against ending the boycott. They claim the boycott has been kept alive through further intimidation of Blacks who tried to shop in downtown stores. United Front leaders say they had "observers" downtown to see who was shopping, but they deny that any pressure was brought to bear on those who were seen participating in the patronization of downtown stores. One man, United Front Photographer Jim Brown, was charged with intimidation when he took a picture of a black woman making a purchase from one of the boycott grocery stores, but the charge was later dismissed. But if the United Front uses intimidation in the black community, the White Hats employ an equal amount of harassment against United Front-owned businesses as well as other black businesses. The Palace Clothing Store has been shot into several times, damaging some of the merchandise; the cooperative grocery store shows the scars of bullet holes; and a prefabricated housing factory has been heavily damaged by arson.

### Front Seeks Economic Power

United Front leaders are seeking an economic power base. The Front operates cooperative grocery and clothing stores and the prefabricated housing factory. "We have been raising money from across the nation so that Cairo can be the basis of an economic power base that can be extended across the nation," Economic developer Williams

says. "This thing is in the experimental stages to create a new economic philosophy for the black community on concepts from throughout the world... like Japan's climb to economic power after World War II, as an example."

Williams points out that the black community must be more than a consumer and merchandiser, "We must move toward being a producer, using the cooperative principals." Stock has been sold in The Palace for two dollars a share. The United Front hopes to raise \$10,000 through the sale of five thousand shares of stock; the \$10,000 will be used as a 10 per cent downpayment on a \$100,000 loan from the Small Business Administration to develop the shopping center in the black community.

"We need to develop something to function within the economic system," Williams says. "Reconstruction gave the black man an economic foundation, but the Ku Klux Klan did away with the black economic independence with little or no opposition from the black man. Here in Cairo we protect our stores by sleeping in them at night with guns. We know they will try to destroy them." The United Front has been aiding in the training of carpenters, cement finishers, brick layers, and plumbers; developing a work force for the 600 housing units needed for the poor people of Cairo. "We can generate from \$5 million to \$9 million through our housing program," Williams says.

The obstacles for Cairo's black community are many. Williams says the United Front spends between \$25,000 and \$30,000 each year in bail bond fees. Only recently more roadblocks have been thrown up and more are expected. In early December about 60 black-jacketed police charged the Brothers during a protest demonstration, injuring several seriously with night sticks. Several arrests were made. Two weeks later 500 marchers from across the nation participated in the Saturday protest rally. Later in December, the Catholic Diocese of Springfield, Illinois, said they were turning St. Columba Catholic Church over to a biracial group for recreational purposes for young people.

Meanwhile, the violence continues . . .

*William R. Brinton has been a free-lance writer for the past two years and has had extensive background in television and newspaper writing. He was formerly employed by United Press International.*

# DESPAIR IN CAPE GIRARDEAU/

WILLIAM R. BRINTON

To the people of Cape Girardeau, Mo., there are "no problems" with the Blacks or the poor of that community and they are right; all effective resistance has been suppressed.

Cape Girardeau has the outward appearance of an average affluent American city with an ever expanding economy. Like most American small towns, its poverty is hidden in one corner of the community. There is no public housing in Cape Girardeau. There are no professional black people in the city. There are no Blacks in city or county jobs.

John Blue, editor of the *Southeast Missourian* of Cape Girardeau, said the black people "really have no complaints in this town."

Although the movement to improve conditions for Cape Girardeau's poor is at a standstill, things were not always that quiet in this southeast Missouri town of 31,600 people. Several months of struggle in what could be called efforts to gain some concessions for Cape's black community culminated in what police called an arson attack on a lumber company and five of the City Sanitation Co. refuse disposal trucks.

Police Chief Irvin E. Beard indirectly blamed the United Front of Cape Girardeau as did the *Southeast Missourian*, only more directly in a front-page editorial.

## Newspaper Accuses Front

"The people of Cape Girardeau know where to look to the cause of these fires, these symptoms of sick and disturbed minds," the *Southeast Missourian* said. "They know the leaders. They have heard their threats. Only one group - the infamous United Front - has made such threats. There is no other group, there are no other individuals, who would or could commit this vicious vandalism."

The *Southeast Missourian* said the arson incident assured the defeat of a federally financed public housing project. Yet, United Front leaders in Cape denied the arson charge and said the housing proposal would have met with defeat without the fire.

The measure, to construct 175 federally financed low rent housing units, was defeated 2740 to 2571 by 33.04 per cent of the registered voters. It was the third time

such a measure has been defeated by the voters of Cape Girardeau within the last 10 years. *One of the groups which took no stand on the public housing issue was the Cape Girardeau Ministerial Alliance.*

## Poor Confined to Smelterville

The problems of Cape Girardeau's poor are tightly confined, hidden from view in a section of Cape called Smelterville. There are only about 800 Blacks in the town of 31,600 and many of those live in Smelterville.

"You have dead people walking around down here," says Richard Snider, a Cape Girardeau attorney. "They don't castrate them like in the old south; it's more subtle."

Snider was one of the original leaders in the now defunct United Front of Cape Girardeau. Before that, he served as county prosecutor from 1959 to 1960 and as an assistant county prosecutor from 1962 to 1968.

An early advocate of civil rights causes, Snider reflects on the abortive attempt to organize Cape's poor in a "town of wealth." It was a story of threats of economic reprisals and pressure from the power structure.

Snider is white. He stands about three feet tall, yet his stature belies a strength that keeps him actively involved for the cause of the poor from early morning until late at night. His office furniture and that in his apartment are made to scale. His close-cropped hair and van dyke beard can be seen more in the black community these days. For Snider's fight for the black people of Cape has cost him the loss of many former friends and most of his law practice. He lives in an apartment above his law office in a modest mid-town dwelling.

Cape Girardeau's hard core poverty area, Smelterville, is a compact area of shanty houses. To all but the Blacks and poor whites living there, it is known as South Cape. The shanty houses are as weather-beaten as the poor who live inside those homes. Its dirt roads turn into sludge during the rainy season. Wrecked automobiles and salvageable items, sometimes the only source of income for the poor, litter the yards which are overgrown with weeds. Its only industry is a dump which was placed there last year. Rats from the big Mississippi River infest the area.

It took several years before the people of Cape Girar-

deau were made aware of what conditions were really like in Smelterville; a revelation which was brought to the surface by Editor Blue. Yet since that time only token efforts have been made to lighten the burden of the poor.

A civic center was established about four years ago in Smelterville, but according to Snider, the center is "a white man's tea house," its directors representing Cape Girardeau's establishment. Snider said the needs of the black community are determined by the white power structure.

About four years ago the Civic Center hired Bobby Williams, now with the United Front of Cairo, Ill., as its executive director for \$4,800 a year, but Williams questioned things, initiated radical programs and became critical of the community. He lasted eight months. But prior to his dismissal, the directors banned him from news interviews, appearing before the city council, or writing letters to the newspaper.

### Organizing The Poor

Attempts to organize the city's poor have failed in the past, but last May the situation exploded when the Mississippi River adjoining Smelterville overran its banks and flooded the poverty area. The area has been inundated by flood waters periodically throughout the years.

Although flooding has occurred several times in the past, residents of Smelterville say the condition is worse since the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed a flood protection wall from Cape's business district to within a few hundred yards of Smelterville.

Old timers of the area say the water flows more swiftly during flooding since the breakwater was constructed. *The flood protection wall could not be extended to include Smelterville because of a cost ratio factor used by the U.S. Corps of Engineers in determining the feasibility of a project.* However, the Corps of Engineers has recently asked the city to resubmit extension of the wall on the basis that it may now qualify.

In a protest over housing conditions in Smelterville and the flooding, about 20 demonstrators staged a sit-in at the city manager's office last May, but were later turned away through threats of arrest. The following day about 40 people were involved in the sit-ins, but the police were prepared this time.

"It was an armed camp," Snider said. "There were cops all over the place."

The city denied responsibility for Smelterville, saying there was nothing that could be done about housing in the area or the flooding. Six people were arrested when they refused to leave the city manager's office. Bond was set at \$150 each for disturbing the peace, a charge which Snider said usually carries a \$25 bond.

The following day demonstrators packed the city council meeting, demanding that charges against the six be dismissed. Police were unable to get into the council chambers because of the crowd and later charged that the councilmen were being held captive, but the council directed the city attorney to dismiss all charges against the six demonstrators.

"It was the greatest day for the black people of Cape," Snider said. "They had finally won something."

### Shop-Ins Fail

Spurred on by the victory, black welfare mothers staged a shop-in which lasted four days in the Main Street stores. Snider said about 15 to 30 men and women attempted to purchase merchandise on credit. Each time the shoppers returned the stores began closing earlier. Snider said attention was directed from downtown to a suburban shopping center where demonstrators were met

### Police Keep Reporter Under Surveillance

The ossification of police units throughout the nation is becoming more and more evident, particularly to those who have been followed for no apparent reason. Wholesale secret or overt surveillance tactics used by police has always been equated with fascist or communist governments. But now even local police tend to spend more time on following minority group leaders, protestors, and newsmen than criminals, assuming the former has no relationship to the latter.

Two such incidents occurred while gathering research material for the articles on Cairo, Ill., and Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Cape Girardeau's new dump in Smelterville has aroused the ire of those living in the area; five sanitary trucks were destroyed by what police called arson. All this seemed to warrant police protection of the dump's main gate.

Shirley Johnson, a black secretary for Cape Girardeau attorney Richard Snider, took me to view the dump. Three police detectives followed us for about twenty minutes while we drove around Smelterville.

While at Cairo, I checked into the public library to obtain a report by the International Association of Chiefs of Police on the Cairo Police Department. When I left the library, a patrol car began following me. It continued the surveillance for about 45 minutes until I returned to the black community.

The merchants in Cairo are hostile toward outside newsmen because of what they termed "bad publicity" in the past. The Cairo Chamber of Commerce has no statistical information on business failures because of the economic boycott imposed by the United Front, nor would they reveal what the effect of the boycott has been on business volume in the city.

James Walders, owner of Walders Clothing Store, is vice president of the Merchants Association. When asked about statistical information, Walders said he would not talk with newsmen "about anything."

"We had some bad publicity in the past," Walders said. "So from now on we don't talk to any reporters."

with even more hostility. Several people were arrested and demonstrators were harassed by both the store owners and the shoppers.

Yet the shop-ins, aimed at equal hiring practices, ended without results.

Last August the dump was put in Smelterville. Houses, most of which have been located there for years under a free lease agreement, were knocked over by bulldozers and burned. None of the leases were recorded. Snider said between 25 and 30 houses were involved, one of which belonged to Bob Burns, a white antique dealer who said he had between \$4,000 and \$5,000 worth of antiques in the house at the time it was set to the torch.

Snider said he realized the shop-ins and boycotts would not work in Cape Girardeau because the black population is too small. Little progress has been made in protesting the location of the dump with the exception that bulldozers now cover the refuse on a more regular basis.

What little resistance existed against the power structure has all but crumbled. Smelterville and the poor can again be forgotten by the city fathers.



# BLACKS APPROPRIATE THE LAW / JAMES A. GITTINGS

Cairo illustrates how *your* local minority, if sufficiently determined and sophisticated in struggling for its understanding of justice, can force your town to the wall and can do so with an exquisite legality that does not reveal the slightest trace of frivolity in its approach to law....

After some initial disturbances, the United Front began to investigate the legal approach in a campaign to win a share, commensurate with the proportion of blacks to total population in the economic and social life of the town.

Courtroom pressures were not the first legal exertions of the United Front, however. The Front included (or imported) persons with knowledge of welfare rights. Soon every poor black in Cairo who had hope of securing welfare grants was shepherded to the local public assistance office. Since local assistance offices are in financial difficulty anyway (high welfare grants in Illinois attract poor whites and blacks from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri), authorities may have counted on black ignorance of the exact ramifications of available welfare services to keep assistance budgets as low as possible. The United Front, however, was soon steering applicants through paper work and past the desks of underlings to the local manager, who watched helplessly as his roster of grantees climbed in all categories — child welfare, assistance to the aged, medical allowance, and so forth....

Yet it was not until the Front found its role in county, state, and federal courtrooms that the town of Cairo realized it had a fight on its hands which could not be won by beefed-up police forces and batches of "special deputies." In mounting its legal challenges, the United Front utilized a Cairo law firm, Lansden and Lansden. Robert and David Lansden are men of a type found more frequently in small American towns than is generally realized. Well-educated (The Hill School, Princeton), they returned home after graduation to practice law in their hometown. Although the Lansden practice was built on general cases, including litigation involving the river trade for which Cairo was once famous, the two men were interested from the beginning of their careers in the troubles of Cairo blacks. Bob Lansden was for a time NAACP attorney for the southern tip of Illinois.

Unlike many white liberals, however, David and Robert Lansden kept pace with the mood of their black neighbors and with the exigencies of their situation. Bob remains today as much the defender of the "radical" United Front as he was the defender of hat-in-hand blacks who came to

Alexander County, or neighboring Pulaski, for justice back in the '30s. It is easy to understand, then, why the Front turned to the Lansdens to fight initial battles with Cairo authorities. Quite handily Bob secured reversals of anti-picketing and antiparade legislation passed by council to thwart the militants.

Although they deny it, the Lansdens paid a price in Cairo for supporting town blacks. Segments of their practice were lost, and threats were received. Instead of withdrawing, the two brothers went the whole hog, opening their ground-floor law library to the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, which promptly sent a Chief Counsel to town. Today the committee's counsel is Martha Jenkins, several decades more nearly the age of the average United Front worker than the Lansdens. She quickly established the necessary rapport with her clients. [Mrs. Jenkins was replaced on March 1, 1971, by Jake Bleveans, former director of the Washington, D.C., office of the Lawyers Committee.]

By April of 1970 the Lawyers' Committee and Mrs. Jenkins had: (1) succeeded in halting all jury trials until such time as a jury list containing a proportionate number of black and white persons had been obtained; (2) won two criminal cases involving accusations of assault related to United Front activities; (3) succeeded in obtaining voluntary dismissal by the state of a large number of criminal charges (trials get expensive, when contested with vigor); (4) filed a federal injunction suit against an anti-U.F. parade and emergency ordinance passed by council; (5) entered a federal suit charging discrimination in schools against students active in the United Front; (6) won a federal injunction against "nuisance statutes" used by police to plague marchers; (7) challenged in court the composition of the all-white Public Utilities Commission; (8) similarly challenged the all-white Alexander County Housing Authority; (9) challenged the expulsion of black students from the schools and so on.

Seven months afterward, in November, her Lawyer's Committee docket showed an additional 75 cases in process, as well as numerous motions filed, each requiring an answer from the state's attorney. The cases involved such varied matters as federal court appeals (housing, education, civil rights), criminal docket matters (no more automatic sentences of insolvent blacks), domestic relations court cases, and representations for the rights of blacks in dealings with health, education, police, medical, insurance, and wage authorities.

The list of activities of the Lawyers Committee and Mrs. Jenkins is awesome. Yet, it is only one segment of the "legal" pressures exerted by the United Front organization.

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Were garbage collections poor in the ghetto? A delegation camped at City Hall. Did a finance collector become a little too energetic? His office was visited for explanations by "community leaders." Were Small Business Administration funds used to bail out boycotted merchants, in danger of going under? The wires flew to Washington and Springfield.

Indeed, the whole community began shrinking a little at the ever-present eyes reading over their shoulders. The mood of agitation was infectious, and communicated itself to the leadership. Outsiders, including industrialists considering location in the area, noted the defensiveness of elected officials and chalked it up to their loss of face in courtroom and other reversals. Furthermore, in legal matters alone, area courts were nearly broke, and the state's attorney for Southern Illinois had to plead for help from Washington and the state capital to keep his justice mills grinding. More chilling (for established processes), poor whites are also discovering the power of law, and some have sought out Mrs. Jenkins and her elderly colleague, Attorney Lansden. Suits have been filed on their behalf. For a while — as long as courts could handle the case load — it began to look as though justice in Alexander County might be for poor people. That's when things began to break down. That's when six sticks of dynamite were pitched through Lansden's library windows with the fuse asputtering (it went out before an explosion occurred).

No reduction in tension resulted, as readers will understand, when United Front leaders challenged the city and county's right to federal funds from the Office of Economic Opportunity and the Housing and Urban Development programs. In 1969 the Front went to court to protest the fact that the composition of the board of directors of the pipeline for federal funds, the Shawnee Development Authority, was not properly biracial. In a decision of March, 1970, some \$5 million of such funds were blocked pending the appointment by the mayor of a citizens' task force that reflected black as well as white interests. As a result, vital Cairo sewers (necessary to prevent the backing up of water behind the levee during floods) and housing went unbuilt....

...it is the black appropriation of choice under law that is new in Cairo and the subject of our inquiry. Patients in hospitals have legal rights, though poor blacks have not

traditionally known much about them. The Front arranges for patient-advocates, people who know the ropes, to accompany the poor when they enter the Cairo hospital. No surprisingly, relationships between blacks and the hospitals have been bad.

Additionally, no one may dictate which hospital a person chooses to enter. Thus, when injuries among blacks have occurred during racial disorders in the town, the United Front practice has been to transport wounded blacks to hospitals across the Mississippi river in Missouri — a tactic that keeps such people, if they die in the hospital, out of the hands of the Alexander county coroner. A legal effect of the practice is to make it difficult to determine how gunshot wounds are received (you can't find out whether powder burns exist, for example, and thus cannot learn whether a man was shot by snipers, or in a local brawl).

Landlords, too, have felt the edge of black legal awareness. People don't move out any longer simply because the owner tells them to. Maintenance is demanded by tenants. Rent increases are fought....

...one must not overlook the reversal of roles involved lest one miss the "black" humor of the events. Usually, black and poor white offenders against order are tried at law. Now, white offenders against antidiscrimination law are *certain*, given the Front's legal resources, to be tried in a way that disturbs the town's social order. Additionally, government is brought to trial quite as often as citizens under the new processes. Among the defendants in Martha Jenkins' cases are, after all, the mayor, the council, the state, and certain agencies of the Federal Government....

Today's legal struggle is the last battle before the deeper trouble that will come unless something is done. If the Cairo process spreads elsewhere, courts must expand, every office must have its staff lawyer and every citizen his consultant. Even then, relief will elude a community....

The prospect is not pleasant. With luck, an outcome will be to return Law to the people, and the fruits of this land to its masses. Determined minorities will prove, at the bar and in the street, what some of us have long suspected, that "justice" is not justice at all so long as it is not a synonym for equity.

## The Cairo Police Department

### " INCOMPETENT . . . INSENSITIVE . . . INADEQUATE . . . "

A survey of the Cairo Police Department by the International Association of Chiefs of Police resulted from an agreement signed in February, 1970, by Quinn Tamm, Executive Director of IACP and Mayor Albert Thomas of Cairo. The funds for the survey were granted to the City of Cairo by the Illinois Law Enforcement Commission.

The principal findings of the survey as summarized by the IACP were:

- The department has long suffered from inadequate and incompetent leadership.
- Too many officers are untrained. This is reflected in the manner in which the department approaches the various problems it faces.
- The citizens of the community have little faith in their Police Department.
- The present economic base of the city should be expanded to support a professional, well-equipped Police Department. If local funding cannot be obtained, immediate steps should be taken to obtain outside assistance.
- Some members of the Police Department and city officials are insensitive to the racial conditions confronting them.
- Racial strife and its related acts of violence are the outstanding police problem of the community.
- The department does not apply basic principles of organization and management.
- Authority has not been assigned commensurate with responsibility throughout the department.
- Confusion exists between rank and function.
- The department's records system is deficient.
- A disproportionate emphasis is given to seniority.
- Training programs in all areas of the Police Department's operation must be initiated and continued.
- No adequate written directives exist.
- The city is patrolled haphazardly. There is no formal beat structure to pinpoint responsibility or assure around-the-clock police coverage.
- A community relations program is long overdue.
- The police facilities are totally inadequate.

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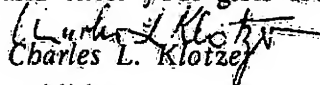
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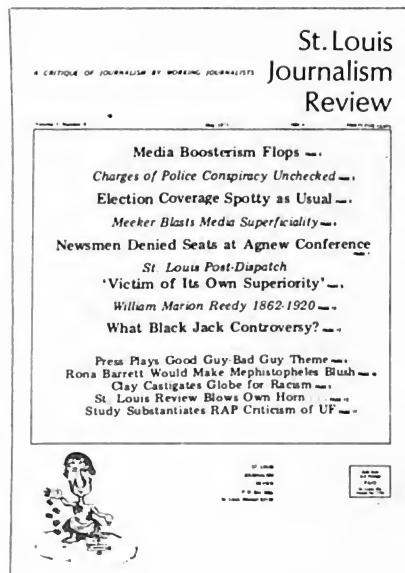
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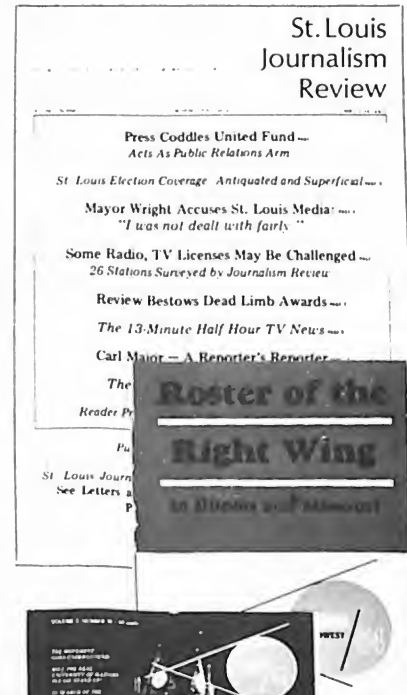
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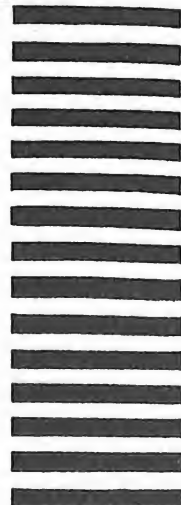
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# THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF THE CAIRO CONFLICT/

GELVIN STEVENSON

The black economic boycott against white merchants in Cairo, Illinois, has been the principal, if not the only, effective weapon used by blacks, and the major cause of anger among whites. What is the nature of the economic power of the black population in Cairo? How has this delineated the United Front strategy? How and to what extent has their strategy affected the local economy?

## Population

Cairo, a town of 6,277 according to the 1970 Census of Population, still contains more than half of the population of Alexander County (12,015), even though its population declined considerably more rapidly (-32.9%) during the sixties than did that of the County as a whole (-25.2%).

Blacks made up 37.2% of Cairo in 1960, but only 33.3% of the population of the whole county. During the 1960s the black population of Alexander County decreased more rapidly (-36.3%) than did the white population (-20.0%). Unfortunately, 1970 data is not yet available on the racial make-up of Cairo. But if two thirds of all the blacks in the county live in Cairo, as was the case in 1960, they make up 35.8% of the population. It ap-

pears that they still lack the strength of a political majority.

## Role of Government

All the elected and appointed officials of the town are white, and many are directly associated with the United Citizens for Community Action (UCCA), a white vigilante group. Every level of government — the city, county, state and country — has opposed the United Front. The only exception occurred when the vigilante White Hats were forced to disband by the state. They reorganized into the UCCA. Recourse to local political channels was thus doomed to futility from the beginning. One indication of the activities of the all-white government of Alexander County and local governments within the county is that their per capita employment and expenditure for police protection are all between 62 per cent and 82 per cent higher than for other counties and local governments in Illinois in the same size category.

An important role of the state government has been to send state police to aid the local police force, a staunch ally of the local whites. In addition to providing brute force, the state police force has played another very im-



portant role in the struggle. The approximately 60 state police regularly assigned to Cairo stay at two local motels. If it costs \$8 per day per room and each trooper buys an average of \$7 per day worth of food and gas in the town, then the state of Illinois has been pumping \$900.00 per day into Cairo. Although this is not nearly enough to cancel out the effect of the boycott, it nevertheless shows the state's position.

### Labor Force — Employment and Unemployment

Even in 1960, the last date for which employment figures are available by race, the unemployment rates of blacks were double (for males) or triple (for females) those of whites. Largely because of these high unemployment rates and the poor jobs available to them, fewer black males even bother to look for work — that is, they drop out of the labor force and are not even counted as unemployed.

Of those black males who were employed, 24% were employed as laborers, compared with 6% of white workers employed as laborers. Conversely, 1.5% of black males were employed as managers, officials, or proprietors, compared with 18% of white males. For black females, an astounding 36% were employed as private household workers, compared to only 6% for white females. It is obvious that a work stoppage by laborers and private household workers would have little impact on the white power structure because they are easily replaced and not at crucial points in the local economy.

The industrial classification of employment shows essentially the same pattern. Whites are overrepresented in wholesale and retail trade. Blacks in personal services. Only slightly more than 10% of total employment is in manufacturing, only above the 8% in agriculture. Therefore the base of the Alexander County economy — those businesses producing for sale outside the county — was extremely small.

Published census reports provide support for the United Front's charge that 41% of jobs in Cairo are held by whites from neighboring Kentucky and Missouri. Only 11.2% of all workers residing in Alexander County worked outside the county, while 24.0% of workers residing in Ballard and Carlisle Counties, Kentucky, worked outside the county of their residence. Although the data doesn't tell us where these people worked, it is definitely consistent with the charge that Cairo employers are hiring whites from other counties while local blacks remain unemployed.

### Effect of the Boycott

How much impact has the United Front's economic boycott of Cairo business had?

On April 7, 1969, the United Front began a boycott of Cairo businesses. The white businessmen downplay its effect, but a look at the data indicates that it has had a substantial impact.

(Of course, it is impossible to precisely separate out the effects of the long run decline in the Cairo-area economy and the effects of the boycott, but changes over a one-year period should be more representative of the short run impact of the boycott than of the long run decline.)

An examination of State Tax Receipts for Cairo, Illinois for Retailers and Service Occupation and Use Taxes for the year before and after the boycott went into effect shows the amount of impact the boycott has had. (These taxes are not precisely sales taxes. They are taxes on the privilege of using a tangible personal property in the state of Illinois. They are collected at the point of sale and are proportionate to an establishment's receipts.)

The 1969 (July, 1968-June, 1969) and the 1970 (July, 1969-June, 1970) fiscal year statistics show a decline of 27.4% in the number of local establishments doing business as compared with a decline of 16.3% for the state as a whole. Moreover, total receipts actually fell by 12.6% for Cairo while they rose by 4.5% for the state of Illinois. Receipts fell in Cairo in all but one (miscellaneous retail and wholesale stores) of the ten categories, while they fell in only three categories for the state. The three categories which experienced the largest decline in Cairo were: general merchandise (-23.3%), apparel (-25.5%), and furniture, household, and radio (-31.6%). It is clear that these are categories that would be hard hit by the boycott. The later establishment of the United Front's co-operative food store has probably caused receipts in food to decline further than the -7.6% they declined in this period.

The conclusion can be stated quite simply. The United Front of Cairo took the best (and almost only) course of action open to them to achieve their basic human rights and dignity. A purely political strategy was doomed to failure. Blacks make up less than a majority of the town's population (approximately 35.8%), even less than that in the county (33.3%). The state of Illinois has implicitly and explicitly, economically and politically, sided with the white power structure. The Federal government has been noticeably absent from the struggle. (The only Federal agency involved has been the FBI, which has worked with the local police.)

The economic strategies available to the United Front in their struggle for freedom were severely limited. Strikes were out of the question, because there was a great deal of surplus labor available, both black and white, and because 'blacks' employment was disproportionately concentrated (in 1960) in the service industry (domestic servants primarily, but also teachers). Blacks' power as consumers was limited by their absolutely and relatively low incomes. (In 1960, median income for black families and unrelated individuals was \$1,109, compared to \$2,186 for white families and unrelated individuals.) Therefore a passive boycott — one that affected no other consumers besides themselves — would have only slight impact on the white power structure. An effective boycott would have to affect other consumers in addition to the blacks.

### Black Economic Base

Development of their own economic base is a potentially effective strategy, but definitely long run. If the short-run strategy had achieved their goals, it may not have been necessary. But it has become necessary as the white oligarchy has continued to resist the United Front demands. This long-run strategy has consisted primarily of collective endeavors aimed at merchandise and food retailing and a pre-fab housing factory. The United Front plans a shopping center, feeder-pig program, and broom factory. It is a very well integrated program — a balance between supplying their basic needs at a lower cost and producing things that can be sold to the rest of the country, thereby providing an income to the community.

The United Front strategy appears to be extremely successful. It is using the boycott, which is essentially a short-run defensive strategy, as a base on which to build political power and a greater measure of economic freedom.

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**STATE TAX RECEIPTS FOR CAIRO, ILLINOIS, MID-1966 THROUGH MID-1969  
FOR RETAILERS' OCCUPATION TAX, SERVICE OCCUPATION TAX, AND USE TAX AND SERVICE USE TAX**

|  | No. of<br>Returns | Total Tax<br>Receipts    | General<br>Merchandise | Food                   | Drinking and<br>Eating Places | Apparel              | Furniture,<br>H.M.P.,<br>Radio | Lumber,<br>Building &<br>Hardware | Automat &<br>Filling St. | Misc. Ret.<br>Wholesale Hs. | Misc.                | Manuf.                |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| July, 1966-<br>June, 1967              | 273<br>165,927    | 515,530<br>711,130,068   | 66,868<br>69,230,532   | 119,741<br>129,333,071 | 61,134<br>57,400,350          | 38,517<br>32,597,971 | 22,400<br>27,241,630           | 22,140<br>62,465,945              | 115,642<br>135,320,445   | 50,448<br>71,503,703        | 8,733<br>23,833,261  | 11,778<br>82,513,151  |
| July, 1967-<br>June, 1968              | 259<br>157,328    | 631,620<br>895,970,359   | 87,891<br>117,029,265  | 150,181<br>163,081,222 | 76,178<br>71,638,902          | 48,815<br>41,767,978 | 27,409<br>33,395,815           | 28,929<br>78,620,413              | 136,186<br>173,598,124   | 58,434<br>90,094,931        | 10,512<br>27,494,970 | 13,079<br>98,250,763  |
| July, 1968-<br>June, 1969              | 248<br>160,402    | 635,090<br>960,577,191   | 90,342<br>126,520,652  | 149,159<br>171,732,222 | 79,379<br>76,189,318          | 43,020<br>44,201,164 | 25,894<br>36,167,866           | 23,645<br>85,418,357              | 138,650<br>188,557,423   | 61,771<br>95,812,821        | 10,810<br>32,824,919 | 12,431<br>105,152,444 |
| July, 1969-<br>June, 1970              | 180<br>134,385    | 555,126<br>1,003,334,685 | 69,585<br>137,568,183  | 137,728<br>188,888,940 | 71,291<br>77,842,350          | 32,300<br>45,026,394 | 17,648<br>35,304,011           | 18,483<br>83,907,517              | 121,371<br>185,455,494   | 65,187<br>104,084,164       | 9,928<br>32,844,578  | 11,803<br>112,475,145 |
| Percent Change<br>Over 4 Years         | -34.0<br>-18.0    | -7.8<br>+41.8            | +8.1<br>+52.2          | +15.1<br>+46.8         | +16.6<br>+35.0                | -11.6<br>+38.0       | -21.5<br>+29.5                 | -16.6<br>+34.5                    | +5.0<br>+37.0            | +29.5<br>+45.5              | +13.8<br>+37.5       | -1.5<br>+36.5         |
| Percent Change<br>Between Last 2 Years | -27.4<br>-16.3    | -12.6<br>+4.5            | -23.3<br>+8.7          | -7.6<br>+10.1          | -10.1<br>+2.0                 | -25.5<br>+2.3        | -31.6<br>-2.5                  | -21.8<br>-1.8                     | -12.5<br>-0.5            | +5.7<br>+8.6                | -8.3<br>+1.8         | -6.5<br>+7.0          |

**TABLES ON**

- TAX RECEIPTS
- EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION & INDUSTRY
- POPULATION
- PROFESSIONS BY RACE
- UNEMPLOYMENT
- POLICE

**EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION IN ALEXANDER COUNTY  
FOR BLACKS & WHITES (1960)**

|  | Total | White | %    | Black | %    |
|--|-------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Male   | 3150  | 2460  |      | 690   |      |
| Professional, Technical<br>and Kindred Workers   | 176   | 139   | 6.6  | 37    | 5.4  |
| Farmers and Farm Managers                        | 241   | 226   | 9.2  | 15    | 2.2  |
| Managers, Officials and<br>Prop'r's, except farm | 460   | 450   | 18.4 | 10    | 1.5  |
| Clerical and Kindred Workers                     | 227   | 224   | 9.1  | 3     | 0.4  |
| Sales Workers                                    | 199   | 195   | 7.9  | 4     | 0.6  |
| Craftsmen, Foremen and<br>Kindred Workers        | 460   | 405   | 16.5 | 55    | 8.0  |
| Operatives and Kindred Workers                   | 545   | 407   | 16.6 | 138   | 20.0 |
| Private Household Workers                        | 8     | 0     | 0.0  | 8     | 1.2  |
| Service Workers, except<br>Private Household     | 275   | 144   | 5.8  | 131   | 19.0 |
| Farm Workers, and Foremen                        | 140   | 69    | 2.8  | 71    | 10.3 |
| Laborers, except Farm and Mine                   | 311   | 144   | 5.8  | 167   | 24.0 |
| Occupation Not Reported                          | 108   | 57    | 2.3  | 51    | 7.4  |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1960,  
PC(1): 15C, Table 68.

**EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY FOR ALEXANDER COUNTY  
BOTH SEXES (1960)**

|  | Total | White | %    | Black | %    |
|--|-------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Total  | 4,894 | 3,701 |      | 1,193 |      |
| Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries                         | 428   | 322   | 8.6  | 106   | 8.9  |
| Mining   | 15    | 15    | 0.4  | 0     | 0.0  |
| Construction   | 223   | 179   | 4.8  | 44    | 4.1  |
| Manufacturing  | 529   | 395   | 10.7 | 134   | 11.1 |
| Durable Goods  | 208   | 138   | 3.7  | 70    | 5.9  |
| Nondurable Goods   | 321   | 257   | 6.9  | 64    | 5.4  |
| Transportation, Communication,<br>and Other Public Utilities | 580   | 480   | 13.1 | 100   | 8.4  |
| Wholesale and Retail Trade                                   | 1,359 | 1,134 | 30.9 | 225   | 18.8 |
| Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate                          | 115   | 95    | 2.6  | 20    | 1.7  |
| Business and Repair Service                                  | 93    | 93    | 2.5  | 0     | 0.0  |
| Personal Services  | 539   | 268   | 7.2  | 271   | 22.5 |
| Entertainment and Recreation Services                        | 45    | 37    | 1.0  | 8     | 0.7  |
| Professional and Related Services                            | 607   | 422   | 11.4 | 185   | 15.4 |
| Public Administration  | 225   | 194   | 5.2  | 31    | 2.6  |
| Industries Not Reported                                      | 138   | 67    | 1.8  | 69    | 5.8  |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population,  
1960, PC(1): 15C, Tables 85 and 88.

## POPULATION / ALEXANDER COUNTY

|                      | 1960*  | 1970*  | Difference | % Change |
|----------------------|--------|--------|------------|----------|
| Total                | 16,051 | 12,015 | -4,046     | -25.2    |
| Black                | 5,298  | 3,375  | -1,923     | -36.3    |
| White                | 10,745 | 8,596  | -2,149     | -20.0    |
| Urban: Total (Cairo) | 9,348  | 6,277  | -3,071     | -32.9    |
| Black                | 3,511  |        |            |          |
| White                | 5,821  |        |            |          |
| Rural: Total         | 6,713  | 5,738  | -975       | -14.5    |
| Black                | 1,780  |        |            |          |
| White                | 4,933  |        |            |          |

\* Figures don't sum up exactly because of the exclusion of what the Census Bureau terms "other races."

UNEMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION (1960)  
ALEXANDER COUNTY

|              | Population | Civilian Labor Force | Labor Force Participation Rate | Unemployed | Unemployment Rate |
|--------------|------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Male Black   | 1,640      | 860                  | 52.3%                          | 170        | 19.8%             |
| White        | 3,794      | 2,724                | 72.0%                          | 264        | 9.7%              |
| Female Black | 1,962      | 586                  | 29.8%                          | 83         | 14.2%             |
| White        | 4,259      | 1,305                | 30.7%                          | 64         | 4.9%              |

Source: 1960 Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Tables 83 and 87.

## POLICE / ALEXANDER COUNTY

## LOCAL GOVERNMENTS    COUNTY GOVERNMENTS

|  | General | Alexander Co.     | General | Alexander Co.    |
|--|---------|-------------------|---------|------------------|
| Full-Time Equivalent Police Protection Employment per 10,000 Inhabitants | 9.2     | 16.7 <sup>1</sup> | 2.9     | 4.7 <sup>2</sup> |
| Average Dollars Per Capita for Police Protection                         | \$5.19  | \$9.00            | \$1.84  | \$3.40           |

<sup>1</sup> Represents 25 Full-Time Police

<sup>2</sup> Represents 7 Full-Time Police

Source: 1967 Census of Governments, Tables 13, 14, 23, 24, 31, 32, 33, 37.

## MEDIAN INCOME (1960) / ALEXANDER COUNTY

|                                    | Black   | Total   |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Families and Unrelated Individuals | \$1,109 | \$2,186 |
| Males                              | \$1,025 | \$2,129 |
| Females                            | \$ 505  | \$ 711  |

Source: 1960 Census, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Tables 86 and 88.

## PROFESSIONS BY RACE

|                   | Total | White | %    | Black | %    |
|-------------------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Female            | 1244  | 1241  |      | 503   |      |
| Professional      | 236   | 178   | 14.3 | 58    | 11.5 |
| Farmers           | 4     | 4     | 0.3  | 0     | 0.0  |
| Managers          | 82    | 71    | 5.7  | 11    | 2.2  |
| Clerical          | 276   | 264   | 21.3 | 12    | 2.4  |
| Sales Workers     | 160   | 145   | 11.6 | 15    | 3.0  |
| Craftsman         | 16    | 16    | 1.3  | 0     | 0.0  |
| Operatives        | 165   | 137   | 11.0 | 28    | 5.5  |
| Private Household | 256   | 74    | 6.0  | 182   | 36.3 |
| Service workers   | 477   | 318   | 25.8 | 159   | 31.5 |
| Farm Workers      | 16    | 8     | 0.6  | 8     | 1.6  |
| Laborers          | 12    | 4     | 0.3  | 8     | 1.6  |
| Not reported      | 44    | 22    | 1.8  | 22    | 4.4  |



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# THROUGH BLACK EYES

The following excerpts cover the last two years and are reprinted with permission of the East St. Louis (Ill.) *Monitor*, which publishes weekly a page of "Cairo News" prepared by Preston Ewing of Cairo, Illinois. FOCUS/Midwest decided to publish the original accounts because no summary conveys a feeling of day to day living in Cairo better than these reprints.

## **Blacks and Whites in Shootout**

THE MONITOR / April 10, 1969

On the nights March 31 and April 4 black residents of the Pyramid Courts Housing Project in Cairo engaged in gun battles with the Cairo Police Department and persons described as members of the now infamous "White Hats." The first gun battle began at about 10:30 at night after black residents of Pyramid Courts said that shots had been fired from a railroad and Mississippi Levee area located about 100 yards from the housing project that houses about one thousand people.

## **Auto Shooting Not Investigated**

THE MONITOR / 1969

On Mar. 31 at about 10 p.m. a 1965 Thunderbird car was fired into twice on a Cairo Street near the Pyramid Court Housing Project. The car is owned by Ripley Young, area coordinator for the Illinois Migrant school in Cairo, but it was being driven by James Chairs who was in the car alone at the time of the shooting. Chairs was not injured. There has not been an investigation of the shooting which took place a couple blocks from the Cairo Police station.

## **Attention All Black People**

THE MONITOR / 1969

Since we have reason to believe that some members of the White Hats and some members of the Police Dept. have attempted mass murder on Monday March 31 by shooting into Pyramid Courts housing project, we are calling a boycott of all stores from 7th to 11th streets in downtown Cairo until the following demands are met: (1) An investigation by the attorney general's office of the shooting into Ripley Young's car on Monday March 31 be made. (2) An investigation by the attorney general's office into the shooting into Pyramid Courts on Monday March 31 be made. (3) The immediate dropping of the charges against Jerry Herrod who was illegally arrested on Tuesday April 1 be carried out. (4) A black chief of police be appointed. (5) A black assistant fire chief be appointed. (6) Black managers in Brokerage Clothing Store and Kress' Five and Ten be appointed. (7) An equal black white ratio in all city jobs be achieved. (Black people now constitute over 50% of the city population!).

## **Cairo Chamber of Commerce Issues**

### **Statement on "Committee of Nine"**

THE MONITOR / 1969

The Cairo Chamber of Commerce believing that the report of the (Illinois) Legislative Committee to investigate Cairo's racial crisis will be "biased, partial, one-sided and derogatory" has issued a lengthy statement concerning the "Committee of Nine." ... The report notes that all five Negro members come from districts where there are large proportions of Negro voters. It further states, "It is reasonable to assume that all five Negro members are members of the NAACP, an organization that has been critical of Cairo and its

citizens." ... The report noting that four members of the committee are white states: "We do not know their politics, nor care. But it can be a fifty-fifty assumption that possibly some of the white members also belong to the NAACP."

The report suggests, "if the people of Cairo are dubious of the impartiality of this committee, it is understandably so." The Chamber report notes that this "community has been pilloried by the press, radio and television as racist, dominated by a vigilante organization, and that law and order has broken down." The report continues, "Yet, out of the welter of charges of harassment, intimidation, racial intolerance, shooting and alleged breakdown of law and order, one fact stands out. Up to now, not a single instance of such charges has been pin-pointed with the names of persons involved, the time and the place. One of the charges has been that there is a breakdown of communication between the races. Without doubt, this is true. But, you do not communicate with the man who is making impossible demands. There is no basis of communication."

## **National Guard Keeps Peace**

THE MONITOR / May 8, 1969

Cairo was unusually quiet while the National Guard patrolled the streets following several nights of firebombing and gunfire in scattered locations throughout the city early last week. ... The street lights in the area around the all-black housing project, Pyramid Courts, were re-installed and gave some light to the area that had been completely black during the weeks since March 31 when blacks and whites engaged in a forty-five minute gun battle. The lights in the housing project itself are still out. The residents of that area shot out the lights after they came under attack.

## **United Front Meets City Officials**

THE MONITOR / May 8, 1969

The National Guards Armory was the scene of a meeting Friday May 2 between the United Front and city officials. Wally Spomer said ... A black chief of police might be considered if a vacancy occurred. A black assistant fire chief could not be appointed until a black man went up through the ranks and that position were created. Black managers in Brokerage and Kress would have to be worked out with them. An equal black white ratio in city jobs might be had as vacancies occurred. The United Front stated that the response of Spomer was wholly unacceptable. It reminded the city establishment that promises were made in 1962 and 1967.

## **White Hats Make Third Attack on Black Citizen**

THE MONITOR / June 12, 1969

On the night of June 4 the White Hats made their third big attack on the black residents of Pyramid Courts and once again they were driven off by the gunfire returned. In the exchange of fire that lasted for almost an hour, the White Hats were finally seen fleeing the area of the Cairo Woods Products Co. located a few hundred feet west of the all-black housing project that is home for over twelve hundred people. Residents of the Pyramid Cts. report that the shooting began about ten-thirty that night and lasted until about



11:30. The Cairo Evening Citizen carried a news story the next day that told of four white men being pinned down from gunfire. . . .

During the time of the incident there was heard on the Citizen Band Radio calls for help while the men were pinned down by the return fire from the all-black housing project. Replies were heard to the calls but the replies asked the callers why they had gone into the area. The so-called "main force" of the White Hats did not respond to the call for help.

The United Front called a meeting for the residents of Pyramid Courts the next day to inform them of steps that have been taken to provide more security for the area. In the previous attacks the White Hats had fired from a group of railroad boxcars that are located west of the area and a few hundred yards from the Mississippi River Levee. It was also reported that shots had been fired from the Tri-County Health Department's complex of buildings. Since that time all of those buildings have been burned to the ground.

#### **United Front Sends Telegram to President** THE MONITOR / June 26, 1969

In view of the fact that there is a complete breakdown of law and order in Cairo, Ill., with citizens of the white community armed with weapons, terrorizing the black community, the black community, at the same time, having to meet this armed attack through armed resistance. Mr. President, the black community has exhausted all means of resolving this dangerous and violatal situation, since everyday in the minds of the black community in (Cairo) is a crisis situation and one of bare survival. We, the members of the United Front, realize that you, Mr. President, are our last resort for some semblance of justice make this appeal, knowing that some action must ultimately be taken by you to meet the urgency of the situation.

United Front

#### **White Hats Go Underground** THE MONITOR / June 26, 1969

The United Front has issued a statement warning the black community that the White Hats are still as organized as ever before despite the fact that they claim they have disbanded their terror organization. The Front said that a deal had been worked out between the White Hats and the State of Illinois where the State would not take legal action against the White Hats if they would promise to be good guys in the future. Their chairman, Toney Levill, issued a statement this week claiming that the White Hats no longer exist.

The United Front said that Levill and Berbling did not control the white militants in the White Hats, so the White Hats would continue as before. The Front charged that Berbling and Levill had been demoted from generals to privates in the White Hat army, so any statement they made were of no value. It is known that the White Hats have been taken over by whites who favor a higher level of tactics than those favored by Levill and Berbling. A recent power struggle within the organization led to the demotion of Berbling and Levill, the Front said.

#### **"White Hatters" March Ends in Riot** THE MONITOR / July 3, 1969

Several hundred whites marched on the Cairo Police station last week in what turned out to be a violent protest against the fact that the White Hats had lost the legal status illegally granted to them by Peyton Berbling, States' Attorney, Sheriff Chesley Willis, Judge Dorothy Spomer and ex-chief of Police Carl Clutts. . . . After a few blacks gathered across the street from the police station they were met with bottles and bricks from the whites. The blacks returned objects as the exchange continued for a few minutes.

#### **Black Policemen Protest Racism** THE MONITOR / July 24, 1969

All five black members of the Cairo Police Dept. are protesting the racial discrimination existing in their working conditions and the treatment of black people by white police officers.

#### **Blacks Reject New Principal** THE MONITOR / July 24, 1969

The two black members of the Cairo School Board, Dorothy Roberson and Van Ewing, voted against John Powell who was accepted by the majority of the Board as the new principal of Cairo High School. Ewing and Roberson voted against Powell because of his

deep southern background and his lack of experience that will be required in Cairo High School which is expected to be no less than seventy percent black when school opens in late August. . . . The best applicant for the job was not accepted by the white majority on the Board. Powell is reported to be a friend of John Evans, the superintendent of the Cairo schools. . . . Nothing has been done by the school administration to move toward a solution of the racial problems that have been common to Cairo High School and Cairo Junior School.

#### **Black Policemen Meet with City Officials** THE MONITOR / July 31, 1969

The five black members of the Cairo Police Dept. met with the Mayor and City Council last week and the policemen presented their complaints concerning the racial discrimination in the department. The complaints were against the Chief, William Petersen and the racist practices common to their working conditions. They charged that there were white policemen that refused to ride in cars with black officers, there is discrimination in work assignments for blacks, the chief was incompetent and racist in addition to the fact that he said that blacks on the waiting list for appointment to the department after passing the civil service test would not be hired because they did not meet his personal standards.

#### **Whites Attack Whites** THE MONITOR / October 16, 1969

White militants turned against their own last week as court decisions were handed down against the city and its police department. Several white businesses were picketed by the members of the United Citizens for Community Action (White Hats). Whites also threw bricks through windows of two white business establishments that have not been supporting the White Hats. The Cairo Evening Citizen, the local daily newspaper had windows broken on two consecutive nights and it was picketed on Oct. 8. The editor of the paper recently made a public statement supporting the charge of the black community that the City did not live up to its promise of 1967 to hire blacks.

#### **Week's Events** THE MONITOR / October 16, 1969

Saturday, October 4, 1969: A day of gross injustice in Cairo. Blacks march and as they attempt to cross U.S. 51 they are beaten and clubbed by the Cairo Police and the State Police. Tuesday, October 7, 1969: United Front has rally and march and at last minute receives an agreement which allows marches on U.S. 51. Federal Judge William Jurgens finalizes the agreement. Wednesday, Oct. 8, 1969: The Ford dealership in Cairo is placed under the boycott. This is owned by Mayor Albert Thomas.

#### **Blacks and Whites March Following Court Order** THE MONITOR / October 16, 1969

U.S. Judge William Jurgens issued a temporary restraining order last week prohibiting city and state police from arresting marchers that are protesting the racial discrimination in Cairo. On Oct. 4 several blacks were arrested and charged with blocking the highway as they attempted to exercise their constitutional rights to march.

#### **Whites Revolt Against White Hats** THE MONITOR / October 23, 1969

The infamous Cairo "White Hats" alias United Citizens For Community Action, (UCCA), recently began to experience internal troubles. They are also being rejected by a great part of the white community that once looked to the "White Hats" with pride.

#### **Named Aide to Police Chief** THE MONITOR / October 23, 1969

William Thomas Jr., 56, a Negro and veteran of 14 years on the Cairo police force as a patrolman, today was appointed, effective Nov. 1, as administrative assistant to Police Chief William H. Petersen in this racially troubled city.

#### **United Front Pushes Demands** THE MONITOR / October 23, 1969

In 1967, the following were some of the primary parts of the agreement between the Black Community and city officials and white

merchants: (1) a Black man was to be appointed assistant chief of police and enough other Blacks would be hired as policemen to equalize the staff. (2) Several Blacks were to be hired on the Fire Department. (3) Blacks would be employed on the Public Utilities. (4) Blacks would be appointed to Commissions and Committees in the city after discussion and agreement with the black community.

**ALL OF THESE PROMISES BY THE CITY AND THE MERCHANTS HAVE BEEN BROKEN.** (1) The most outstanding member of the police force in terms of ability, training, and experience is a Black and is still a patrolman. All ranking officers on the Force are white. No additional Blacks have been hired by the Police Department. . . . (2) The Fire Department is today, two years later, 100% white as it has been for 100 years. (3) No Blacks have been appointed to the Board of Public Utility Commission and No Blacks have been hired. The entire personnel of the Utility Commission remains all white as it has been since it was created 23 years ago. (4) No Blacks practically have been appointed and the few that have were handpicked by whites and no consultation has been made with Black leaders.

### **United Front Supporters Found Not Guilty**

THE MONITOR / November 26, 1969

A Sanamon County Circuit jury in Springfield, Ill., found forty-two supporters of the Cairo United Front not guilty last week on the charges of disorderly conduct and creating a public nuisance. . . . The integrated group of protestors included over two dozen nuns and several priests. They were arrested on July 22 on orders from Gov. Richard Ogilvie after they camped outside his Springfield office and sang freedom songs. . . . During the trial Lt. Governor Paul Simon testified on behalf of the 42 defendants.

### **UF and Cairo Mayor Testify in Springfield**

THE MONITOR / May 21, 1970

James Sanders of Marion, Ill., told of his problems as a special assistant to the Ill. Atty. General for the Cairo Office that was established. He reported that jury discrimination, discrimination in law enforcement by the county states attorney and unjust police practices were the main complaints his office received. Lt. Gov. Paul Simon testified concerning his efforts to help solve the Cairo problems. He stated that it would be necessary for the city administration and the white business community to meet the demands of the black community before the confrontation in Cairo would ease. Charles Gains, representing the Illinois Attorney General, stated that he had found that the organizations making up the United Front represent a great majority of the black population of Cairo and the surrounding area.

### **Boycott Reinforced**

THE MONITOR / June 4, 1970

The boycott is now 432 days old with no end in sight. The merchants still refuse to hire blacks and address them with courtesy titles. Many of the merchants made no secret of the fact that they were members of the White Hats. The vigilante group was put out of business under that name and they lost their police powers. However, several new groups have openly advertised the fact that they were anti-black, the White Citizens Council, the United Citizens for Communion Action and the Birch Society are known to be active groups in the community.

### **Schools End Quiet Year**

THE MONITOR / June 4, 1970

The Cairo public schools ended their third year of integration last week. The school year was not marked by the racial incidents that were common during the first two years, following total integration. There was also a reduction in the number of complaints about racist teachers from black parents and students. Many of the teachers that were the targets of such complaints in previous years left the public schools and accepted employment in the Camelot school.

### **Population Decline**

THE MONITOR / June 4, 1970

In the last ten years Cairo's population decreased by 3,141 people. If the rate of decline continues at the present rate the city will be ghost town with a population of zero on September 27, 1989.



### **Smith Urges State's Attorney to Seek Aide**

THE MONITOR / September 3, 1970

Peyton Berbling (Alexander County State's Attorney) indicated interest in stopping a \$90,000 Office of Economic Opportunity grant to the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights, which has an office in Cairo. "I am infested down there with two lawyers for the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)," Berbling said. "And the defenders association moved — they're all over the state now — and then I have the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law with this woman married to this Negro, Jenkins (Mrs. Martha Jenkins). They are all there with plenty of money and personnel. All I've got is Mr. Sheppard here (Bud Sheppard, special investigator)." . . . Berbling protested that the lawyer's committee is engaging in "socialized legal services."

(Ill. Senator Smith later urged Berbling to seek a grant to hire one aide.)

### **City Council Learns Blacks Must Help Decide**

THE MONITOR / September 10, 1970

The Cairo City Council received word this week from the Regional Council of Federal Agencies that the creation of a citizen task force will continue to be a requirement before any federal funds for new programs as applied for by city hall will be funded. Mayor Thomas has been in disagreement with the Council because it has insisted that blacks be recognized for participation in decision groups working toward securing federal funds.

### **Rev. Harris Found Not Guilty**

THE MONITOR / September 10, 1970

The Rev. Manker Harris, public relations director of the United Front of Cairo, was acquitted last week of disorderly conduct and creating a nuisance during a demonstration Aug. 1, 1969, at the state capitol.

### **Boycott Offer Called A "Trick"**

THE MONITOR / September 17, 1970

The black leadership and the black community have both labeled an offer by city hall and Cairo store owners as a hoax and a clear case of bad faith. . . . The city said that it would train six blacks for the police department and six blacks for the fire department if the blacks would call off the boycott. Blacks call this blackmail and a trick. . . . The proclamation stated that blacks would not be hired until the boycott was ended and thirty days have passed. . . . The mayor of Cairo said that twelve blacks would be hired full-time in stores and six part-time black employees would be hired. Great mistrust surrounds the proposal because federal money has not been applied for and the offers are stated in such a way that it demands that blacks do what they are told to do and more good things may be offered.

### **Police Chief Resigns in Frustration**

THE MONITOR / September 24, 1970

The administration of justice, Cairo's biggest problem, claimed another victim last Sunday as Roy Burke, Chief of the Cairo Police Department, resigned. He threw in the towel after eight frustrating months as head of a police department with such a bad image that the Illinois State Police recently stated that "working with the Cairo police has been a bad experience." Burke is the fourth chief of police resignation in the last year and a half. Carl Clutts was the first

in June of 1969 and his successor, William Petersen, resigned twice with his final resignation coming in January of this year.

#### **Vigilante Appointed County Coroner** THE MONITOR / December 17, 1970

The White Hat vigilantes were given another position in the county courthouse last week when Leslie Chrestman, an active member of the group, was appointed Alexander County Coroner. He will serve out the unexpired term of Donald Turner, a major supporter of the vigilantes, who was elected Alexander County Sheriff in November. Chrestman was photographed several weeks ago with two guns by a United Front photographer. He was with other whites while shots were being fired into Pyramid Courts, an all black housing project in Cairo.

#### **Office of Human Resources Attacks UF and Ill. Council of Churches** CHICAGO SOUTH SUBURBAN NEWS / November, 1970 Reprinted in the United Front News

Tuesday, November 26th, Leon N. Perry, Public Information Director for the Governor's Office of Human Resources, issued a prepared statement to the press. The press release was titled STATEMENT ON CAIRO ILLINOIS and read in part as follows: "We applaud the actions of the Religious Ad Hoc Committee that met in Springfield last week, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Frederick A. Roblee, Executive Secretary of the Illinois Council of Churches. We commend these churchmen for their demonstrated concern over the continual unrest in Cairo, however, I must seriously question why these churchmen failed to include in their document, any call for cooperation by the Cairo Black United Front and its leader, the Rev. Charles Koen." . . .

STATEMENT ON CAIRO ILLINOIS also contained an attack on the Rev. Charles Koen, Executive Director of the Black United Front in which Rev. Koen was challenged to "demonstrate that he is not only a militant leader but an able master of arbitration as well." . . . According to Perry's statement, "We feel that the recent 'Peace & Progress' resolution put forth by the merchants and City Officials of Cairo, should be sufficient to open talks on previously stated grievances." . . . In responding to the Perry press release concerned citizens black and white have expressed dismay that the Information Director for the Governor's Office of Human Resources would indulge in personal attacks on either party to a dispute in whose settlement that office hopes to participate.

#### **New March A Tense Standoff** NEW YORK TIMES / December 6, 1970

At the head of a line of about 80 marchers, the Rev. Charles Koen, the leader of the United Front of Cairo, a long muffler around his neck against the chill, stared straight ahead. On either side of him were husky young black men in Afro haircuts and dungarees. Even for this bitterly divided city where gunfire occurs almost nightly, it was a tense scene. Yesterday saw the first daylight gunfire downtown. It also saw the serious wounding of a white special deputy sheriff.

For 21 months now, the United Front has been waging a boycott against the downtown businesses, backed by regular Saturday picketing of the stores. A local antipicketing law was thrown out by the Federal courts, but with the Christmas season approaching, the City Council enacted a new set of ordinances limiting picketing, including a rule that pickets must be 20 feet from the entrance of the store involved. . . .

The 20-man Cairo police force has deputized a number of auxiliary policemen — many of them reportedly members of the white vigilante group known as the "White Hats" — and they were in evidence along the sidewalks. A thin white, barely out of his teens, wore a police jacket with an American flag patch on his sleeve and cradled a Thompson submachine gun in his arm; a few doors away, a gaunt older man with a patch reading "Police" on his baseball cap held a "grease gun" — a stubby automatic weapon with a wire stock.

As the demonstrators marched back toward their church, the police stopped a car driven behind the line by the young blacks. A dozen policemen, brandishing their weapons, surrounded the car and spreadeagled the driver. "Illegal muffler," shouted one officer. A young black photographer named Carl Hampton, who is a member of the United Front, began taking pictures. A policeman carrying a carbine approached him. Pressing his face close to Mr. Hampton's, the officer said: "There's a whole lot of us after you, boy. We're going to kill you. You know that." . . .

#### **Boycott 660 Days Old** THE MONITOR / January 21, 1971

In face of recent attacks on the black leadership in Cairo, the black boycott of the downtown Cairo stores continues with no end in sight. The boycott is now 660 days old.

#### **Will There Ever Be Peace in Cairo?** SOUTHERN ILLINOISAN / January, 1971 (Reprinted in Monitor)

Cairo city officials would do well to consider carefully an eight-point peace proposal issued recently by the United Front. . . . The proposal itself is a carefully worded document which calls first of all for open-ended discussions. "Until our common problems are solved, it is hoped that every morning at 10 a.m. (or any other time that the mayor, councilmen and retail merchants can agree upon) discussions will be held between the United Front and the above-mentioned parties," the proposal states.

Other steps proposed in the document include creation of a United Chamber of Commerce which would include all black businessmen as well as white; establishment of a United Citizens Police Control Board to receive complaints, hire and fire and perform other needed functions; creation of a bi-racial task force as proposed by the Federal Regional Council before federal funds can come into the city; creation of a United Builders and Loan Association and support of the United Cairo Housing Development Corporation of Housing and Urban Development (formed by the Front and given initial funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Illinois Housing Authority.) . . .

I saw for myself the bullet holes in the rectory of St. Columba Church, where several United Front staff members live. The storm window and inside window in the living room were both broken by a bullet (or bullets) that seemed to have continued in a downward trajectory through a cabinet across the room. By looking upward through the bullet holes in the window, I had an unmistakably direct view of a crow's nest on the top of the Cairo police station.

#### **David Moberg's Account of October 24 Incidents** GUARDIAN / Reprinted in the Monitor (Feb. 18, 1971)

"Friday night . . . lawyer's offices associated with the United Front were shot up. Forty bullets were fired into the parsonage of St. Columba's church, headquarters of the Front, smashing windows, barely missing beds. All the bullet trajectories indicated they were fired from on high, somewhere to the east. That points to the 'crow's nest' firing platform on top of the police station. A black man walking home to Pyramid Court was wounded in the head. Several stores owned or patronized by blacks were shot up.

"Saturday was the clincher. All white racist nightmares were conjured up by the official tale; 16 to 20 blacks in fatigues . . . carrying automatic weapons . . . The next day Mayor Albert Thomas hinted it was the Black P Stone Nation, a black youth gang from Chicago . . . After 'several hundred rounds' of automatic weapon fire (following months of alleged black sniping) I could count no more than a dozen (the N. Y. Times found 14) or so pock marks on the face of the station. Also, the police seem to have been unable to wound or kill any of their 'attackers' who had apparently parked their attack vehicles (according to UPI) directly in front of the station.

"Confronted by this reporter the following Wednesday, police chief Fred Theriac, changed his story. He only saw three blacks, not 16 to 20, and they were across the street. He admitted that earlier stories from police that firemen had been driven back fighting a fire consuming a grocery store in the black neighborhood by sniper fire were 'false reports.' "

#### **Mayor Tells "Lie of the Year"** THE MONITOR / February 18, 1971

In America, these days, it's possible for a Law-and-Order demagogue to self-inflict horrible and dastardly crimes against his "state" without causing any damage. All they have to do is issue a press release and let the new media handle their P.R. . . .

Now we have Cairo — Cairo, Illinois — the media's latest guerilla battleground, the place where "squads of armed Negro men" (UPI) or 19 to 20 "rifle-wielding blacks in Army fatigue uniforms" (AP) shot up a police station last month. Only they didn't. This powerful but phony story has spread throughout the world. And it is still spreading. Of the major white media, only the New York Times has raised a skeptical eyebrow. And some of the most respectable and

"responsible" media — not just the Chicago Tribune and its spiritual comrades — have kept the story alive: the Wall Street Journal, Newsweek, all of the Chicago dailies, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, ABC National News (where the story was the number-one item on the Oct. 24 10 p.m. news), Reuters, and, of course, both wire services.

### **State Police Continue Actions Against Blacks**

THE MONITOR / February 18, 1971

The Illinois State Police continued their moves to break the black movement for civil rights in Cairo as they broke into two more black apartments in the all black housing project, Pyramids Courts, last Friday. Frank Hollis, Debra Flowers and James Wilson were arrested and charged with the theft of guns from a national guard armory in Chicago. . . .

### **Percy Says "End Racism"**

THE MONITOR / February 25, 1971

U.S. Senator Charles Percy was a great disappointment to Cairo's white leadership last week when he made a one day visit here. He said that the time for racial discrimination is over. . . . Percy ended the meeting by saying that he would not be interested in helping Cairo until racial discrimination ended and equal opportunities existed for blacks. The white leadership sat quietly with their heads down. They had realized that their scheme had failed. The local newspaper, the Cairo Evening Citizen did not print a word about the outcome of the meeting.

### **Eviction Back in Hands of Bishop**

THE MONITOR / February 25, 1971

Bishop Albert Zuroweste of Belleville finds that a problem has been dumped back in his hands. The eviction of the United Front from the black Catholic Church, St. Columba, that he ordered Father Bernard Bowdes to accomplish not later than Feb. 1, 1971, has not been carried out. Father Bowdes refused the orders because he felt that it was a conspiracy to cripple the United Front which has been fighting for civil rights since April of 1969.

### **Boycott Closes More Stores**

THE MONITOR / February 25, 1971

The 690-day-old black boycott of the downtown Cairo stores continues to create economic disaster for white businessmen who are opposed to employment opportunities and courtesy for blacks. The tenth and eleventh stores to close their operations were the Fabricland and Sears, Roebuck & Co.

### **Radio Station Bias**

THE MONITOR / March 18, 1971

The Cairo United Front filed a petition with the Federal Communication Commission in November of 1970 asking that the license of WKRO be revoked or withheld until such time racial discrimination was ended. The station is guilty of presenting bias news reports by Bob Stout and other employees. The station employs no blacks and it does nothing to meet the needs of its responsibility to the black community. . . . (Stout is also the Cairo stringer for United Press International, but the United Front contends he is not so much a reporter as a mouthpiece for the mayor.)

### **Court Says Police Raids Were Illegal**

THE MONITOR / Thursday, March 25, 1971

Declared illegal in Alexander County Circuit Court on March 17, 1971, were several search warrants used by State Police in raids on the all-Black Pyramid Court Housing Project in Cairo, Ill, January 21, and Feb. 12, 1971. (Included on those "quashed" were warrants on Frank Hollis, James "Switch" Wilson and Mrs. Deborah Flowers.) Defense attorneys are preparing additional motions to have other warrants quashed. These illegal warrants were used against other Blacks living in the housing project. United Front officials from the date of the raids have declared the forced intrusions by State Police, with the help of the local police, county police and FBI agents to be illegal. Ironically, these rulings by Judge George Oros, came only one day before Governor R. B. Ogilvie of Illinois, declared in a press conference in Springfield that he is "entirely satisfied with the special detachment of State Police who have been sent to Cairo."

### **State Chamber Fails In Cairo**

THE MONITOR / April 1, 1971

The Illinois State Chamber of Commerce came to Cairo for three days this week at the invitation of local white merchants seeking an end to the 725 day old boycott of their stores by the blacks of the Cairo region. They, as have many others, failed . . . .

### **Illegal Surveillance by State Police**

THE MONITOR / April 15, 1971

State police detectives were as busy as ever last weekend filming license plate numbers of cars parked near the site of the weekly United Front rally. Many numbers are also written down and an immediate check is made with the state agency of car registration.

### **Great Day For Cairo Whites**

THE MONITOR / April 29, 1971

History will have to record April 20, 1971 as the greatest day in the history of Cairo for the militant white community opposed to continued suppression of blacks. That was election day and the white vigilante organization had three of its most active members elected to four year terms on the Cairo city council. It was a dream come true and they worked hard with great support to accomplish their victory.

### **Vigilante To Be New Police Commissioner**

THE MONITOR / April 29, 1971

James Dale, one of three members of Cairo's vigilante organization that won seats on the city council last week, is expected to be made police commissioner when the new councilmen take their seats on May 3. Dale has been involved in several confrontations with blacks as they have conducted their protest activities against racial discrimination. He is known in the black community as one of the most active gun carrying members of the white citizens group. . . .

### **Vigilantes Strip Mayor Of Powers**

THE MONITOR / May 6, 1971

The vigilante controlled Cairo City Council is reported to have taken all powers from Mayor Pete Thomas at the organizational meeting of the council following the recent election.

Reports indicate that Thomas has been reduced to a mere figurehead and he will only exercise the ceremonial power of opening city council meetings. . . .

### **City Council Rejects New Housing**

THE MONITOR / May 13, 1971

The Cairo City Council has struck another blow against the poor people of Cairo who are living in the worst of dwellings. The Council has gone on record against the sale of land for the construction of one-hundred single family housing units in Cairo. . . .

### **Shootings Erupt Again In Cairo**

THE MONITOR / May 13, 1971

Although it is not uncommon, the return of heavy gunfire has again disturbed the uneasy peace of the last few days.

Last Saturday night saw the heaviest gunfire since December 5, 1970. It began on the Mississippi River levee at about 9:30 p.m., following what whites called a big day in that a white parade had been held in an effort to drum up downtown business which is poor because of the successful black economic boycott.

Residents of the black housing project, Pyramid Courts, reported that on several intermittent periods Saturday night gunfire was seen and heard coming from the levee area. Most people were awoken and stood guard throughout the early morning hours.

The shooting marks the 154th night since March 31, 1969, that white vigilantes have leveled gunfire into the black community. During that period the Cairo Police have also made indiscriminate attacks on the black residential area. . . .

### **Attacks On Pyramid Courts Continue**

THE MONITOR / May 27, 1971

The black residents of the all-black housing project, Pyramid Court, continue to be the victims of night time shooting that last for periods of several hours. . . .



## **Cairo Loses In Defeat Of State School Aid Bill**

THE MONITOR / May 27, 1971

The Illinois House of Representatives Education Committee voted along party lines last week to kill a bill for increased state aid to school districts hard pressed for money. The bill was sponsored for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Michael Bakalis who has shown high interest in the problems of the money troubled schools. . . .

## **Attorney General Links Mob to Cairo Troubles**

THE MONITOR / June 3, 1971

Attorney General William Scott charged that organized crime has been responsible for much of the racial strife in Cairo, Ill., and said he will wage courtroom battles against the hoodlums if the legislature grants authority for him to seek statewide grand juries . . . . He said he was convinced that organized crime has been involved in illegal gun running to put weapons into the hands of both black and white extremists in the troubled southern Illinois city. . . . "According to what black legislators have told me, the blacks are being hurt down there and they can't get the local state's attorney to do anything about it," Scott said.

## **Attack on Police Station Impossible**

THE MONITOR / June 3, 1971

The Cairo police station was not attacked last Saturday night by so-called black militants. There was no attack on the police station. The strongest proof is the fact that there was no physical evidence that the station had been attacked. All of the windows were in order. The glass door of the station at its front was not broken. The stone building still shows four marks of unknown origin that have been used several times by the police as so-called proof that the station was attacked. . . . The credibility of the police story further declines when it claims that they saw black militants shooting out of the windows of St. Columba Rectory. To know the race and color of so-called snipers at 10 p.m. at night is impossible but the police asks the public to believe that they identified black snipers from inside the police station . . . .

## **Catholics Call for Action**

THE MONITOR / June 10, 1971

The following statement was made last week by Rev. Michael Lucey, Director of the East St. Louis Catholic Inter-City Council . . . : "On May 29, 1971 the Cairo City Police indiscriminately fired bullets and tear gas into St. Columba's rectory and church. There were three unarmed persons in the house — two priests and a lawyer. We especially wish to thank the Illinois State Police for rescuing them from being killed by the Cairo Police Department and racist vigilantes.

## **Jury Refuses to Believe Policeman**

THE MONITOR / June 17, 1971

Are the Cairo police honest? This question played a major part in the court case in the Alexander County Circuit Court last week where a jury of five blacks and seven whites found two blacks not guilty of the charge of resisting arrest. . . . After a short period in conference the jury members all agreed that they could not believe the story of the police in face of the evidence presented by the defense. (A \$16,000 study of the Cairo police by the International Association of Police Chiefs supports the fact that the police are worthy of the bad reputation they enjoy. The Illinois Law Enforcement Commission withdrew almost \$100,000 of its funds from programs approved for the Cairo police immediately after the election of James Dale as police commissioner.)

## **Governor's Aide Visiting Cairo**

THE MONITOR / June 24, 1971

Illinois Governor Richard Ogilvie has sent one of his top aides, Paul Wisner, to Cairo this week in response to a request by the United Front that a complete investigation be conducted relating to the continuing injustices against Cairo's black population by police and vigilantes. . . . Wisner said Ogilvie "favors a federal grand jury inquiry and some time ago recommended one to the U.S. Attorney General." F.B.I. agents have presumably been gathering information in Cairo recently "for preliminary evidence needed to call a federal grand jury," Wisner told the Globe-Democrat.



## **Blacks Fighting Court Actions**

THE MONITOR / July 8, 1971

Bob Williams of the United Front is facing new court actions in the State of Missouri on the alleged charge of purchasing firearms in that state and bringing them into Illinois. No whites in Cairo have ever been charged with any violation of gun law despite the fact that Cairo is an armed camp. Williams is one of the key figures in the several United Front programs designed to assist the black and the poor in Cairo.

Rev. Charles Koen of the United Front is also faced with legal problems growing out of a beating he received from St. Louis police in 1968. He was convicted by a city court and sentenced to six months in the city jail. He appealed to the Missouri Supreme Court which last week upheld the lower court conviction.

## **Missing Newspapers Found Burned**

THE MONITOR / July 15, 1971

The hundreds of people in the Cairo area that weekly depend on the East St. Louis Monitor with its Cairo News Section for the news of Cairo that the local paper will not print, were deprived of their paper on June 18. The papers are shipped by bus from East St. Louis but the Cairo bus station operators said that the papers never arrived. To this day no word has been received from the bus station operators as to what happened to the papers. . . . The mystery continued until UF photographer Carl Hampton received a phone call informing him that "If the niggers want to read their nigger paper they will find them burned on the Ohio River Levee".

## **Former Cairo Police Chief is Indicted**

THE MONITOR / July 15, 1971

A Federal grand jury has indicted Roy Burke, 31, a former chief of police of racially troubled Cairo, Illinois, on charges of violation of the federal firearms act, it was reported . . . . The indictment charged that Burke was a convicted felon and therefore had violated federal law by purchasing firearms in September, 1970, while he was still chief of police of Cairo. . . . (Also) Burke was dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Marines after serving four months in a military prison.

## **Memory of Black Soldier's Death Still Alive**

THE MONITOR / July 15, 1971

. . . Private (Robert L.) Hunt was a black soldier that was hung in the Cairo Police Station late in the evening of July 15, 1967 after being arrested by the police while riding in a car with friends that hot and humid Saturday night. Members of the Cairo Police Department alleged that Pvt. Hunt hung himself with an undershirt that friends said he was not wearing because of the hot weather. The story of the police was never accepted because of the well known practices of brutality of the policemen and the strange circumstances that surrounded his death coupled with the secret manner in which the matter was handled after his death became public.

An examination of the cell in which he was said to have taken his life indicated that it was impossible for him to have hung himself in a manner described by police. The inquest into his death was not held for two months and immediately after it, the coroner quit his post. His death was immediately followed by four days of fires and shootings in Cairo. Peace was restored after the Mayor and City

Council made seven promises to end racism in the fire department, police department and other city controlled agencies. To this date none of the promises have been lived up to . . . .

### **Concerning Jury Duty**

THE MONITOR / Aug. 19, 1971

. . . .To insure justice, it is most important for every black person who is asked to serve on a jury in Alexander County to do so. If you miss a week's work, this sacrifice may save an innocent black brother or sister a year, five years, or ten years in the penitentiary.

### **Chief Gives Up On Cairo Police**

THE MONITOR / Aug. 19, 1971

. . . . Fred Theriac, an obscure policeman from the East St. Louis Police Department, called it quits last week after serving as chief for only nine months. He, like those before him, did little or nothing to improve the department which the International Association of Police Chiefs called "incompetent and poorly led." (Theriac is the fourth chief to quit.)

### **Black Meridian Students Suspended**

THE MONITOR / Sept. 9, 1971

Several black students enrolled at Meridian High School in Pulaski were suspended last week because they appeared to be growing "mustaches". The actions are part of the continuing efforts of that school administration to violate the rights of blacks and dictate conformity in appearance.

### **Cairo Whites Angered by Koen's Release**

THE MONITOR / Sept. 9, 1971

. . . . Charles Koen, paroled Friday, is still a patient in the same room at the hospital where he was taken Aug. 24 from the Workhouse because of the effects of a fast in which he consumed only water. He lost 58 pounds and is down from 170 to 112 pounds, it was reported. One difference now is that the chains no longer shackle to his bed the man who had led movements in Cairo, Ill., St. Louis and East St. Louis. Koen only smiled when the chains were removed . . . . Police Commissioner James Dale of Cairo, where the United Front has led a two-year black boycott of white merchants, commented: "If every prisoner in the country would go on a hunger strike, what would that do to our penal system?" Dale, Cairo Police Chief William C. Bowers, and Alexander (Ill.) County Sheriff Donald Turner had sent telegrams opposing parole for Koen to Gov. Warren E. Hearnes of Missouri.

### **Cairo Police Attack Again**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 7, 1971

The Cairo police struck against last week. They illegally raided two black business places on September 29, then beat and arrested several blacks that were customers. Extra police and vigilantes were called out to perform the so-called raids that were conducted without search or arrest warrants. Reports indicate this took place after the mother of one of the policeman alleged that someone had attempted to take her purse. The police then went on a spree against blacks wherever they could find them. The two businesses were cafes where blacks are usually present in great numbers. At Abbie's cafe several blacks were beaten and arrested by the police. At a cafe in the uptown area, Arlester Coleman was arrested and charged with disorderly conduct. (Others were also arrested in other parts of the city.)

### **Meeting Held On School Problems**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 14, 1971

. . . .The parents told of their efforts to secure justice for their children at the school which has very few black teachers and no black administrators. They stated that one of the main problems was the racial attitude of the high school principal.

### **Rewarding Criminal Actions**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 14, 1971

. . . .A white state policeman was being considered for an award because of his actions against the black people of Cairo. . . . Nominated for an award was Bill Reineking, supervisor of the Illinois state police in Cairo. His nomination read that he "has taken the blunt of published criticism and censure by the Cairo United Front

and has two major civil law suits filed against him in federal court." It also said that he was a hero while "under live fire from militant sources." . . . Reineking has suffered several defeats in the courts of law. He and all law enforcement officers have been ordered by a federal judge on two occasions to stop arresting blacks for picketing and marching. Reineking also entered into legal moves to have the Rev. Manker Harris, white public relations director of the UF, charged with attempted murder against the Cairo vigilante police. The matter was thrown out of court later. Reineking was principal figure in the raids on black apartments in the Pyramid Courts housing area. (Reineking was being considered for an award by the Illinois Governor's Awards Program, the first of its kind, to honor state employees.)

### **Koen Returns to Cairo**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 14, 1971

The Rev. Charles Koen, executive director of the Cairo, Illinois, United Front has returned to Cairo after a three-month absence. He is still recovering from illness caused by a seven-week water fast that he went on when he was placed in the St. Louis Workhouse.

### **Black Representation Being Sought**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 21, 1971

The Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law has notified state, county and city officials that it has been requested to take legal action to secure representation on boards, committees and commissions for the black population of Cairo and Alexander. . . . Some of the boards and commissions which have . . . all white or almost exclusively white membership are: Cairo Industrial Board, Board of Public Utility Commissioners, Fire and Police, Civil Defense, Welfare Service Committee, Public Library, Board of Election, Citizens Advisory Committee, Police Pension, Planning and Zoning, Board of Appeals-Planning and Zoning, Delta Regional Planning Commission, Tri-County Health Department Board, Alexander County Health Department Board, A.C. Public Building Commission, A.C. Land Clearance Commission, A.C. Airport Authority, A.C. Selective Service Board, and A.C. Housing Authority.

### **Blacks Speak Out on School Problems**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 21, 1971

Cairo history was made last week and again this week as blacks had their first opportunity to give their views on what kind of programs are needed in the Cairo schools. . . . to representatives of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

### **Radio Station Continues Discrimination**

THE MONITOR / Oct. 21, 1971

Cairo's radio station WKRO is continuing its efforts to maintain its anti-black position that it has held for many years. A 15-man advisory committee created last week was reported to have been given the assignment of helping the station change its racial image. Three Cairo blacks were appointed to the group. . . . The three blacks appointed are not a part of the black community's organized effort to force the station into compliance with existing federal communication laws. . . . A hearing on the issues is pending before the FCC.

### **The Days of Mayor Pete Thomas**

THE MONITOR / Nov. 4, 1971

Cairo's mayor, Pete Thomas, has given up on the vigilante organization controlled city council. The mayor resigned last week after being appointed to that post almost two years ago. . . . Thomas was known to blacks as a "moderate racist" that believed in using deceptive practices in his efforts to deal with the demands of the black population. . . . When the new (vigilante) council members took over they gagged the mayor and restricted his moves to involve the city in proposed (federal) programs. . . . (The mayor and federal officials) were all hoping for an opportunity to pour money into Cairo. Blacks fought this move because black participation in the planning and fruits of the programs were not protected.

The blacks also say that the days of game playing ended when the militant whites were elected. They say that they have more respect for the White Citizen's Council members than they had for Thomas because the militant whites don't practice deception. . . . It is without question that the blacks are faced with a city government that is totally dedicated to the denial of opportunities to blacks even if it means a denial of opportunities to the white community.

# A HINDSIGHT VIEW OF URBAN DISORDER IN THE '60s /

LOUIS H. MASOTTI

When group violence is discussed among students of the subject, two themes seem pre-eminent. The first is causation, i.e., who acts violently under what circumstances. The discussion is likely to resound with theories about the frustrated, the oppressed, the alienated, the hopeless, and the riff-raff. The second theme focuses on motivation, i.e., whether the violence is meaningless or purposeful, expressive or instrumental, inarticulate or articulate, "issueless" or not. In general, the distinction is between violence as individual or group catharsis and violence for systemic impact.

There is a third aspect of group violence which has probably received more attention in the mass media than it has among students of civil disorder. It concerns *effects*, or what difference it makes, and to whom, that the violence took place.

## "Shootout in Cleveland:" Last of the Great Ghetto Revolts?

In attempting to answer the question of why there have been so few major uprisings in the ghettos since the 1968 Cleveland "shootout," and why those which occurred appear to have been less severe in intensity, duration, and consequences, it may be instructive to review what was being predicted during the height of the riot period, 1967-1968. None of them to my knowledge was optimistic about the immediate or long range future of the cities in general and race relations in particular. This pessimism was shared by most observers, regardless of race or politics. The future looked bleak as the riots increased in intensity. Perhaps my own assessment of the situation, written late in 1968 as we looked toward 1969 and the future will suffice to make the point about pessimism:

Thus far the crisis of authority and the questioning of legitimacy has resulted in separate polarizations within organizational and institutional structures. As yet the coalition of the alienated — a coalition which is historically necessary for revolution — does not exist. Black power challenges urban institutions, the peace movement confronts foreign policy makers, advocates of the "new politics" shake the political parties, clergymen chastise their churches, and students disrupt the campus and create disorder in the classroom. There is conflict and disorder with a common theme of questioned legitimacy all about us, but there is no single issue or cause to unify the dissidents. Whether this series of individual polarizations remains separate depends in large part on the perceptions and reactions of the majority public and its officials. When protesting groups succeed in communicating their grievances, confrontation can be avoided and legitimacy re-established only if the response is appropriate and creative.

All too often, however the response to protest, even when the grievances are legitimate, is the immediate resort to counter-violence and repression. While it may restore order, it will escalate violence and increase polarization.

The logical categories of response to collective violence in the ghettos seemed to be: (1) suppression and repression, (2) racial warfare, (3) black-dominated property-oriented violence and (4) black-dominated violence to people.

With the hindsight of several years, the pessimism of 1967 and 1968 was unnecessarily severe; each of the predicted alternative patterns of response to the urban violence of the mid-1960's failed, in general, to materialize. Violence was suppressed but many would argue that force was used more judiciously to control disorders as time went on. The repression of liberties amounted to the federal "Rap Brown" Act, the discussion of possible detention camps for dissidents, and most significantly, the intensification of dossier-keeping and surveillance in the name of public order.

It seems appropriate to ask why the predictions about violence in the cities were apparently inaccurate. (I say "apparently" since we can only talk about the short term at this point.)

## Toward an Explanation of Urban Riot "Wind Down"

The intention here is to offer alternative explanations which are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

(1) *Control of Urban Disorder Was Effective:* Coercion and force were used by agencies of social control, and they were effective in suppressing the expressions of dissatisfaction by urban blacks. This repressive behavior took two basic forms. The first was blatant and immediate in the sense that large numbers of well-armed (some would say over-armed) social control agents (policemen, Guardsmen, Army regulars) were put on the streets to disperse rioting crowds. And they did so, often causing an escalation of violence, a large number of injuries and the tragic loss of many lives. A second kind of repressive behavior emerged as the experience of social control agents on the streets led to more sophisticated tactics of crowd control. The old crowd control manuals were drastically revised and more subtle techniques were employed in later riot situations: the tactical use of force, more permissiveness in allowing rioters to express their anger, or finding alternative channels for it. This more sophisticated approach is perhaps most dramatically seen in the decision by Cleveland Mayor Carl Stokes to withdraw the police and National Guard from Glenville in 1968, which probably avoided a bloodbath considerably



more serious than the nine deaths which did occur. Such actions are not without consequences however: the Cleveland police have never forgiven Carl Stokes for "preventing them from doing their job."

(2) *Sincere or Insincere Concern by the Regime for Dissidents* Another regime-defined strategy is the expression of sincere or insincere concern by officials which may diffuse or deflect the thrust of protest. Perhaps the best example of this is the appointment of a study commission. The Commission may be a sincere expression of concern or it can be a way to avoid a more direct response to the situation.

Sincere or not, the expression of concern by the regime can have the effect, temporarily at least, of reducing violence in anticipation of accommodation, without necessarily achieving any tangible results except the restoration of order.

(3) *Rioting Defined as Non-Productive* This is a dissident-defined strategy which results in the abandonment of behavior, i.e., rioting and violence, defined as fruitless at best and possibly counter-productive. The assumption here is that the violence was intended to produce something, i.e., it was instrumental rather than expressive. By some criteria it is judged by the dissidents to have been unsuccessful. Under such circumstances, withdrawal and/or reassessment of alternative strategies would seem a reasonable course of action.

(4) *In Expressive Riots, Catharsis Achieved* If in fact the urban disorders of the Sixties were expressive manifestations of anger and frustration on the part of the black ghettos, the diminution of disorder might be explained by the achievement of catharsis. Five, four, or even three days of "running amuck," or "rioting for fun and profit," as Edward Banfield would describe it might be sufficient to "get it out of their system." Such an explanation avoids attributing any political motivation to the riotous behavior. This strikes me as perhaps the most naive of all the explanations offered.

(5) *In Instrumental Riots, Dissidents Purposes Served Directly* At the opposite end of the continuum is an explanation which argues that the riots indeed constituted articulate protest, i.e., were consciously instrumental, and that their purposes were served directly or indirectly. Here, it is assumed that certain policy changes occurred *because* of violence. Since such changes, or at least the recognition of the need for such changes, on the part of public officials were the goal, the rioting ended.

(6) *In Instrumental Riots, Dissidents Purposes Served Indirectly* In addition to the direct effects of riots, we can assume that there were some indirect, albeit instrumental,

consequences. In particular we might consider the significance of the development of black consciousness and black pride engendered by the common experience of the riots. Both the outside forces used to suppress the riots and the constructive black leadership which emerged from them probably served the unintended or latent purpose of in-group cohesiveness.

Another indirect consequence, which will be discussed in the next section, is the potential of black consciousness for a more effective political power base in black urban sub-communities. This consequence has important implications for local as well as national politics.

(7) *The Reduction of Dissidents' Aspirations and Expectations* An alternative explanation for the phasing out of ghetto riots might be the reduction of aspirations on the part of ghetto dissidents.

### Did the Riots Make a Difference?

Perhaps the most significant question that can be asked about the deaths, damage, and injuries resulting from the ghetto riots of the Sixties and the efforts to control and prevent them is this: What difference has it made, and for whom?

To a considerable extent of course, the answer to this question depends on whether one views the ghetto violence as instrumental or expressive. If instrumental, i.e., if violence is a conscious strategy for urban change, one must be concerned with whether the effects were intended or not. If on the other hand the riots are labeled expressive, an appropriate question to assess effect would ask whether satisfactory levels of catharsis were reached by those involved.

In 1970 the following assessment of the effects of the riots was made by a black social scientist:

Since the Kerner Report was issued . . . things have gotten worse for Black people. Social welfare programs are being cut; the Nixon-Mitchell Administration is obviously unfriendly toward the black liberation struggle; hostile forces have been sent to city halls and state houses in alarming numbers; police forces around the country have stockpiled monstrous arsenals to pacify the black communities; the McClelland subcommittee has published more than 20 volumes, including police mug shots, on radical groups paving the way for quick identification and perhaps elimination; demographers tell us that black in-migration will continue, and we do not need demographers to tell us that whites will continue to run to the suburbs. Thus the cities are likely to become impoverished islands inhabited by nationalist-oriented black people and surrounded by affluent suburbs inhabited by nationalist-oriented white people.



This pessimistic analysis suggests that the riots accomplished nothing.

There are only three logical answers to the question of effect. Riots, like those experienced in the mid-sixties might be judged as having no effect, i.e., they were ignored and nothing changed because of them. This conclusion is obviously unwarranted. The second alternative is that ghetto violence "revolutionized" the cities in the literal sense i.e., things either got much better or much worse because violence was employed. Most would agree that while the conditions of urban minorities haven't improved significantly since the riots, neither have their rights been severely repressed. (Indeed, I shall argue in the next section urban violence has resulted in an unintended net gain for the black community.) The third alternative explanation of effect focuses on incremental change or system adaptation. Most of the evidence we have seems to argue strongly for accepting this explanation.

Assuming the third and most logical alternative, i.e., that incremental process and policy changes did in fact occur at some point after the riots, we are still faced with the difficult problem of what has changed since the riots that might not have changed had the riots not taken place?

### Urban Change: Because of or in Spite of the Riots?

#### *Racial Migration and Geography*

It was expected that the riots would have a depressing effect on black migration to the cities. It has been estimated that the average annual city black population increase dropped from 370,000 in 1960-66 to 100,000 in 1967-69; and the 100,000 can be explained almost entirely by natural increase.

#### *Social Control Strategies*

A second kind of change, referred to above in the discussion of "riot wind-down," concerns shifts in the techniques and tactics of preventing and controlling violence in the city. Social control agencies, and especially the police, have become much more sophisticated about when to use force, and how much. It seems clear that this change was a direct result of the challenge presented by the riots in the mid-Sixties. While "police riots" may not yet be over, the probability of their occurrence has been reduced. Since a police related event was responsible for triggering almost all of the ghetto disorders, these shifts in police behavior may be among the most significant effects of the riots.

#### *In the Social Signaling System*

A third general effect of the riots has been a noted change in what Norton Long has called the "social signaling system." Whether this was the next logical step, or a response to the message conveyed by the riots, we have witnessed "advanced tokenism" in the past few years. The minorities who used to be acceptable tokens only at the bottom are now appearing in ever increasing numbers at the top. Programs of "affirmative action" to hire and promote minorities are being rigorously pursued by government agencies. The effects may be observed in the color composition of business management, political tickets, television ads and programs, and entering classes of graduate and professional schools.

While tokenism may be an unacceptable practice, it is not without significance as a signal of social status within the system to be achieved by other members of the group.

#### *Racial Attitudes: Polarization or Consensus?*

Despite the anger, frustration, and disappointment engendered by the riots and the reactions to them, the attitudinal polarization between the races, predicted and expected, has not materialized. If anything interracial understanding has improved since the riots. The polls indicate that whites are more willing to accommodate black assertions of equality and demands for meaningful integration.

And although pride has become an important factor in the race relations equation, as will be argued in the following section, the attitudes of blacks cannot be characterized as belligerent. Assertive would be a more accurate term.

#### *Black Consciousness and the Future of Race Relations*

If we can make the realistic assumption that the riots increased the sense of black consciousness, as far as anyone knows the development of black consciousness was not the intent of the violence.

Obviously for some blacks, the riots proved a point about black pride, dignity, manhood or courage which some felt needed to be made. But the point having been made, many withdrew with little likelihood of future participation. Whether they become reactivated depends in part on what is accomplished by those blacks who capitalize on consciousness. There are some who have seized the opportunity created by black consciousness to reassess the black condition and to devise strategies and tactics to best utilize these resources for the next phase of interracial politics.

One possibility of course is organized political violence of the type the pessimists predicted in 1968-1969. Despite sporadic outbursts of hostility directed primarily at the police, planned violence by blacks against whites or establishment blacks has not materialized. It may be that Harold Cruse was correct when he noted that the black violence of the Sixties was premature because there was no black program for change. The question is whether it is any more appropriate now.

A second alternative is the development of what Sears refers to as a "racial partnership," an inner-city, all-black, economic, political power movement which will help free black people from dependence on white power structures. Jesse Jackson's Operation Breadbasket comes to mind.

"Racial coalition" which Bayard Rustin has been urging since the early days of the civil rights movement, is a third way of capitalizing on black consciousness. This strategy is based on the assumption that a minority cannot succeed in a white system unless it participates in coalitions, and coalitions require at least shared benefits, and preferably mutual interests. The development of black consciousness in the Sixties might be the basis for the development of black power in the Seventies if black control of black community resources (e.g., votes, investment capital, and such instrumental protest activities as economic boycotts) can be used as trade-offs in bargaining situations and the formation of coalitions. Coalition politics with blacks dealing from a position of strength is likely to result in significant gains through conventional political tactics. Others would argue that this is less fruitful than a successful revolution against the system; it is also less risky.

It might be suggested that the significance of the Sixties' riots need not necessarily be found in the programs and policies of public and private institutions. What may be most important for the near, and distant, future are the reactions, adjustments, and planning taking place in both the black and white communities. In other words, indicators of riot effects ought to be behavioral as well as programmatic. The present activities of the black community are likely to generate new demands of the political system and new supports for it. Ironically, the violence of the Sixties has measurably improved the chances of black success through conventional politics in the Seventies.

Louis H. Masotti is associate professor of political science and urban affairs and director, Center for Urban Affairs, at Northwestern University, Evanston.

/ Malcolm Glass

# THE TRICYCLIST

The sidewalk mumbles  
to my wheels, and the cracks  
click like train wheels  
clipping my veins  
in darkest sleep.

The sandspurs, sprigging  
from the grass, chew  
at the edges of my tracks;  
the spokes whine silent  
as a siren on the moon.

The world is sunlight  
and leaves in a long swallow  
of wind, and my shadow  
blinks across the eyes  
of ants and crickets.

I brake. Stop. — my front wheel  
touching the garage door.  
The wind dies. I hold  
my breath / and begin  
to disappear.

/ Ernest Kroll

# CRICKET

Throbbing in the garden bed —  
Engine  
Driving the chysanthemums.

# TWO HORSES

I.  
The heads of  
Two horses,  
Crosswise,  
Over a  
Fence —  
Two silences  
Conferring.

II.  
Two horses,  
Side by side,  
But nose to tail.  
Reversed:  
To trouble to  
Adjust this, each  
Unwilling  
To be first.

/ William D. Elliott

# WE THINK

One would think  
if people wanted to  
put themselves to the test  
they would take something  
simple like basil; you snip,  
snip off the bits of leaves  
and carry them around in a  
sack or give them away to  
Goodwill: you can't always  
tell how a mean man acts:  
we think he simply  
puts his heart to the test.

# SUCH RIGHTS

Now pollution, the lakes are  
receding, such sharp real estate  
operators, working their eyes and  
their wars, old nature warriors  
cutting the ground with their slices  
so we see, with the turn of the lots  
they provide, the crude machinations  
of their hearts in purity, understanding  
this country is not at war but the  
purity of the country red cold works  
putting out the fires: such fire in  
civil rights we have, such rising  
taxes.

*Don Thompson's writings will shortly be published in Fiddlehead, Canadian Forum, West Coast Review, and Edge (New Zealand). A long poem, "Toys of Death," which appeared in Prism International has been released as a chapbook by Sono Nis Press, Vancouver.*

*M. S. Glass directs the writing program at Austin Peay State University. He has been published in Cimarron Review, Kansas Quarterly, Cape Rock Journal, Southern Poetry Review, and Southern Humanities Review.*

*Ernest Kroll has published two books of poems. His writings appeared in a wide variety of publications since 1945.*

*William Douglas Elliott has been published in Ann Arbor Review, Poetry Review, Northern Minnesota Review, Encore, and his poems will be included in The Young American Poets, Second Selection, to be published by Follet Books. His writings have also been presented in many other publications.*

/ Don Thompson

# 1936

The years beneath me  
ribbon  
like fish sperm  
slowly toward this surface  
then flow  
uselessly through me  
into a once ripe sun  
Drifting  
belly up in the pond you dug  
father  
I hear the old windmill  
ache in the still air  
it is that year  
again  
your blood swirls like dust  
and blows you  
West.



## THE RIGHT WING

An earlier issue of FOCUS/Midwest (Vol. 3, No. 6) carried a "Roster of the Right Wing and Fanatics" describing 45 organizations and its leaders located or active in Missouri and Illinois. The Roster is available at \$1 each. The following regular column keeps the information current.

### ACCURACY IN MEDIA

A relatively new group dedicated to "straightening" out the nation's news media has announced its formation, officers, and goals. Calling itself Accuracy in Media (AIM), the group comes out of an old study, luncheon and correspondence organization called the Council Against Communist Aggression and Alexis de Tocqueville Society.

The parent group includes a sampling of trade unionists, writers, academics and organized right-wingers — all interested in exposing the evils of communism. One of its leaders in recent years, Reed Irvine, is an economist for the Federal Reserve Board during the day and a prolific writer of book reviews and letters to the editor at other times.

With a distinctly hawkist viewpoint, the ringleaders have been taking exception for several months to media handling of the Pentagon papers and to CBS programs dealing with the Pentagon and Castro. Executive Secretary of AIM is Abraham H. Kalish, a retired professor who has taken the conservative side in local school affairs. The President is Dr. Francis G. Wilson, a former professor of political science at Illinois who has written and lectured on the right-wing circuit. He is on the letterhead of the American Conservative Union and is Chairman of the Committee for Constitutional Integrity, a group trying to keep state legislatures from lowering the voting age. In addition, AIM has a National Advisory Board of prestigious names from academia, diplomacy and journalism which includes Dean Acheson, former Secretary of State, and Elbridge Durbrow, the former Ambassador to Vietnam who is now running the Freedom Studies Center.

Several AIM leaders are involved in the American Security Council.

### ALL GERMAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE CONFERENCE

A relatively new coalition of ethnic groups, headed by Germans and headquartered with the established All-American Conference to Combat Communism, held a meeting in Washington October 15 to 17. Called the second All German-American Heritage Conference, the meeting was a coalescence of the German

American National Congress (DANK) the Federation of American Citizens of German Descent, the National Confederation of Ethnic Groups, and other similar organizations.

### AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

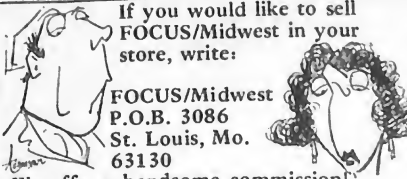
The Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, has helped start a drive to raise \$25,000,000 for the right-wing American Enterprise Institute as a potential haven for Republicans when they leave office. The head of AEI, William J. Baroody, was Barry Goldwater's brain-truster, after which he tried to create a new image of the organization that would not jeopardize its tax-exemption. The story was broken in Scripps-Howard papers by Dan Thomasson, who learned that Laird had entertained a group of GOP fund-raisers in his private dining room at the Pentagon. Baroody's son, William, Jr., is Laird's top assistant and occupied the same position when Laird was a Congressman.

### BIRCH SOCIETY

The John Birch Society has started rating members of Congress as to their votes on "defending America, upholding the Constitution, and strengthening individual liberty by opposing statist controls and tax-extortions." The highest ratings in the House went to John Schmitz and John Rousselot, the two California Birch members, and to Philip Crane (R., Ill.), H. R. Gross (R., Iowa), Durward Hall (R., Mo.), and John Ashbrook (R., Ohio). The five top Senators are Goldwater, Thurmond, Brock, Buckley, and Harry Byrd, Jr.

And Welch wrote the faithful in the October *Bulletin* of the John Birch Society that Richard Nixon wants to rule the world through a "Communist-style dictatorship." After reviewing his original opinion of Nixon in "the conspiracy," which Welch withdrew from print during the 1968 election, the head Bircher concluded: "The record seems to me to indicate quite clearly that, since at least 1960, Richard Nixon has had the all-pervading ambition, and the unshakable determination, to use the Presidency of the United States as a stepping stone from which to become the first ruler of the world."

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### TAXES AND THE RIGHT WING

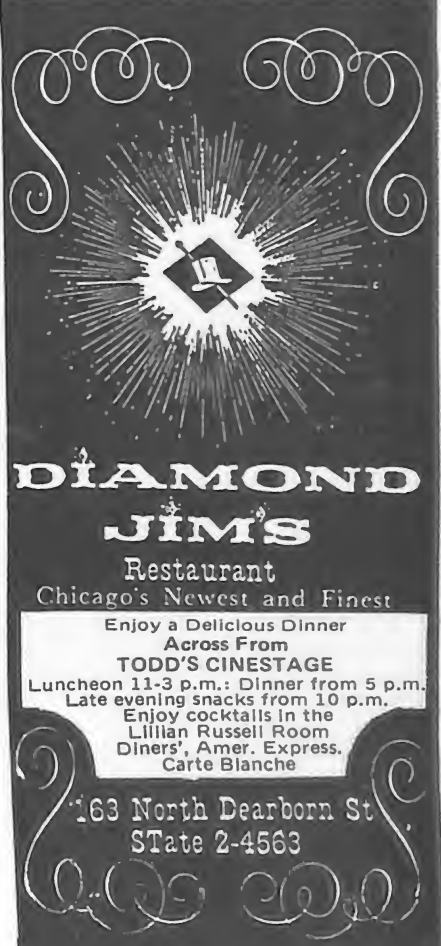
Dr. Billy James Hargis is gloating over a Federal District Court decision in his favor which overrules the Internal Revenue Service. IRS took away Hargis's tax-exemption about four years ago on the grounds that he exceeded the bounds of religion and education by political activity. However, the government is appealing the decision, indicating a major test case.

Major Edgar C. Bundy, in a solicitation for funds for his Church League of America, states that IRS confirmed last April the tax-exemption granted him in 1942, apparently giving him a victory over objections that he, too, is involved in politics.

Meanwhile, tax-exempt foundations continue to contribute to right-wing organizations. Among those recently announced are: \$25,000 from Litton Industries Foundation to the Church League of America; \$150,000 from the J. Howard Pew Freedom Trust to the Christian Freedom Foundation; and \$30,000 from the Pew Memorial Trust to Dr. Fred Schwarz's Christian Anti-Communism Crusade.

### TWIN CIRCLE

Father Daniel Lyons and a colleague at *Twin Circle* have joined Herbert (I Lea Three Lives) Philbrick in the U. S. Press Association, which distributes canned and unidentified editorials for paying clients.



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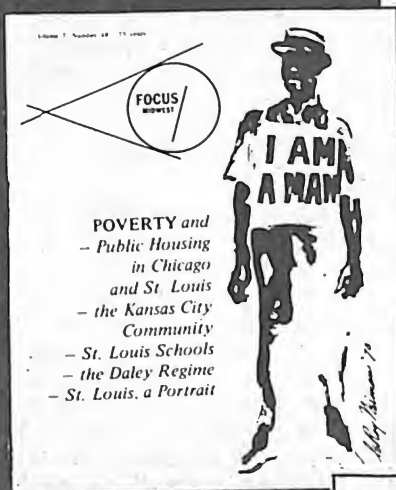
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